

STRICTURES
ON THE
PRESENT GOVERNMENT,
CIVIL, MILITARY, AND POLITICAL,
OF THE
British Possessions,
IN
INDIA;
INCLUDING A VIEW OF THE
RECENT TRANSACTIONS IN THAT COUNTRY,
WHICH HAVE TENDED TO
ALIENATE THE AFFECTIONS OF THE NATIVES:
IN A
LETTER
FROM AN OFFICER, RESIDENT ON THE SPOT,
TO HIS
FRIEND IN ENGLAND.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE individual, to whom the following statement of facts, relative to India, was addressed, conceives, that he is fulfilling a solemn duty to his country, by making it public, at a juncture, when our possessions in that quarter are now *openly threatened*, after having long been secretly assailed, by the most formidable of all the enemies to regular government, that ever existed on the face of the earth. For the writer, he can most conscientiously vouch, not only that *truth* has guided his pen throughout the narrative; but also, that he has been actuated by motives far above private pique or personal antipathy, however severely some of his remarks may seem to affect the conduct of *certain persons*, whose errors ought to be known, that they may, at least, be shunned by their successors. On the speculative points immediately connected

with the subject, nothing need be urged in this place. Their importance, whether treated agreeably to pre-existing opinions or otherwise, are a sufficient apology for their introduction; and will ensure them the candid examination of all, who duly appreciate the *immense stake* which Britain possesses in "her Indian empire," so much an object of envy to the tyrant of the continent of Europe.

Trichinopoly, August—1807.

MY DEAR SIR,

I HAVE received your long and interesting letter of the * * * *, in which you deplore our late misfortunes, and demand of me, not only the causes from which they have originated, but the remedies to be applied, so as to secure us from similar events in future. Were it in my power to detail to you these causes, I fear it would be in vain to expect any remedy to be applied to prevent future misfortunes, until the great stake we hold in India, is appreciated *by the nation*, at its full value.

To you, I need not set forth the wealth annually flowing into England from her East Indian possessions, nor their vast national and political importance; but so long as a revolution, or commotion, in the smallest province on the continent of Europe, shall continue to excite more interest and attention, in the minds of the people of Great Britain, than the total ruin or welfare of their valuable empire in India, it is impossible to expect any beneficial arrangement can be brought forwards by individuals, or even by Parliament, for the better government, or greater security, of these possessions.

To *us* in India, it has the appearance of the completest infatuation to reflect, that an empire, yielding such a revenue, and held by an army of nearly two

hundred thousand men, better disciplined, accoutred, and appointed, perhaps, in every military equipment, than any in the world, and officered by natives of the united kingdom of Britain, should apparently excite so little *general* interest in the mother country. *Partial* interest, indeed, must be felt by the parents and relatives of officers and others, serving in India, and by persons immediately about the India-House, whose finances are affected by any unfortunate event, which may affect the safety of the country, or threaten to interrupt the channels of their prosperity. However, if motives of self-interest were insufficient to excite, in the minds of the people of England, an adequate idea of the value of these eastern possessions, it might at least be thought, that the importance set upon them by our enemies, would, at any rate, raise their estimation in the eyes of the country to its proper standard: but this even does not seem to be the case, although there is little doubt but the despotic ruler of France would make the greatest of sacrifices to get a firm footing in India; nay, we have great reason to believe, that the late disturbances have been fomented, if not actually excited, by French instigation.

We are naturally, therefore, at a loss to account for the little regard paid by the English nation to all subjects and arrangements relative to India; and at a greater loss to conceive, how a people, so jealous of trusting unlimited power in the hands of their ministers, or any executive officers, should leave such an empire at the entire mercy of a few individuals; nor

think it worth their while to interest themselves further on the subject. It is true, indeed, that when any person has been brought forward, from self-interested or party motives, to answer for mal-practices or misdemeanors said to have been committed in these distant possessions, a hue and cry has been raised against him; and a parliamentary enquiry has actually taken place; but this has proceeded on a narrow basis, totally insufficient to lay a foundation for the energetic government of an empire, larger in extent, population, and value, than most of the kingdoms on the continent of Europe.

To a common observer it would indeed appear, that the British nation in general, supposed none interested in the affairs of India but the directors and proprietors of India Stock; and that, therefore, nothing is requisite but to place proper restrictions upon their dividends, and obtain security for the surplus revenue being carried to the national credit in "the ways and means;" or, in other words, that Hindostan, with all its policy, revenue, and commerce, is the private property of the East India Company, and, therefore, not worth looking after by the nation. I believe this is a national trait in our character, and that, were the whole empire in India to fall to pieces, it would cause as little *national* regret, and less noise, than would be occasioned by the loss of the dirtiest little island, or smallest colonial province, in other parts of the world, which may have usually been called *national property*.

Many circumstances have occurred to strengthen

this very astonishing national apathy, and to keep all subjects, relative to India, in the back ground. Amongst the foremost of these, I consider the avidity with which ministerial influence has gradually been exerted, to share with the directors of the company, in the management of eastern concerns; and the consequent united interest of ministers and the directors, to conceal from the public eye, the immensity of power and influence so great a patronage affords them.

The directors of the company's concerns must be naturally jealous of all interference on the part of the nation, in a kind of monopoly, granted to them exclusively; and was it to be expected, that during the length of time Mr. Dundas held the patronage of India, as a kind of hereditary lairdship, he should be anxious to bring more of its concerns before the public, than were necessary to secure his power? But to have some faint idea of this patronage, you have only to take up the "India Calendar" or register of servants, military, civil, marine, judicial, or commercial, employed by the company, and compare it with the establishment of any power in Europe (France excepted); and when you reflect, that the patronage of this voluminous calendar is divided amongst a few individuals, you need not be surprised to learn, that each party is afraid or unwilling to make a fundamental alteration in the system, or to bring the subject before the public eye.

Ministers (I speak not of any party in particular, but of the invariable late systems of ministry), have long appeared only to be waiting an opportunity of taking

the greatest part, if not the whole, of this patronage into their hands. Too abrupt a declaration might cause a clamour against the increased influence of the crown; so that, whilst they are obliged to carry on their approaches gradually, the directors are as obstinately, though silently, endeavouring to defend the body of the place, the outworks having already fallen into the hands of ministry. Whatever one party may gain or the other lose in this struggle, the contention is equally adverse to the national interests; and particularly so to the good government of our eastern possessions, which must consequently be left to the caprice of the times. The sooner, therefore, some effectual and final arrangement is made, the more stable and permanent will be our dominion in India, which, it cannot be denied, has lately received so rude and alarming a shock.

Such, however, is the rotten foundation upon which the basis of our power, at present, actually rests; and from hence you are to account for all the incongruities which pervade every subordinate department of the system. Nay, a stranger would suppose, that the government, in all its parts, had been formed by a chemist, rather than by a legislator.

If you are not already too much tired for such an excursion, if you will follow me to Madras, I will endeavour to explain myself more fully. At the outset, however, as you, though interested in its concerns, have never been in India, I must claim your confidence in my veracity; and the rather, as many, who have

had no local experience, may be induced to reject my statements as absolute impossibilities.

In this imaginary tour, you must divest yourself of all partiality, and consider yourself as not belonging to any side or to any profession. I say *imaginary* tour, because in *reality*, if you did not enlist yourself on one side or the other, you would be looked upon as a neutral, allied to *no* party, and consequently neglected by all parties. I do not mean that you would be exposed to mere ceremonious neglect in society, but that an injurious negative would be put upon all your hopes and prospects of advancement in life.—But to proceed.

Montesquieu has laid it down as a fixed principle in all governments, that “the laws of the mother country should never be carried to her colonies.” A stranger, therefore, on his arrival at Madras, is not surprised to learn, that the Anglo-Indian government is of the most despotic kind; that the most common-place paragraph, is not allowed insertion in any of the public newspapers, until sanctioned by the authority of government; that he himself is subject to the severest penalties of martial imprisonment, if he neglect to report his arrival, at the proper office, within a few hours after his landing; and that he will be seized and placed under a guard, if found ten miles from the presidency without a passport from government.

Although very generally known, it may be as well to state, that the powers of government are vested in the hands of a governor and three members of council, one of whom is the commander in chief of the troops, the

other two being selected from the company's senior civil servants.

The government is divided into four departments, (viz. the general, public, and commercial department; secret and political department; revenue department; and the military department), having a chief secretary to the government, and a secretary to each department. The principal subordinate transactions of these are conducted by boards, consisting of an indefinite number of members, but in general of three. The commander in chief is president of the military and medical boards; the senior civil counsellor is president of the revenue board; and the junior, of the commercial and marine board.

The majority of voices in the council, (where the governor has a casting vote), determines the negative or affirmative of all measures; with this proviso, that the governor has it in his power to carry any measure into execution, contrary to the votes and opinions of all the three counsellors, upon taking the whole responsibility of such measure upon himself: this, however, he has seldom occasion to do, as any one of the members, being interested in voting along with the governor, a majority is gained by his casting vote.

You are better acquainted than I can possibly be, with the original appointments of these officers in Europe; but here it is generally believed, that the governor and commander in chief, although appointed and commissioned by the company, are actually nominated by ministry, through the Board of Controul. The no-

mination of the civil members of council, is supposed to rest with the Court of Directors.

It might therefore be expected, that the governor and commander in chief, as being ministerial men, would always second each other with their votes, and thus carry any point wished by the ministry at home: but here commences the trial of skill.

The governor has much to expect from the Court of Directors, should he enforce their plans and views; and, if he openly thwarts or disobeys them, without good and sufficient grounds, they have the power to recall him.

There are few governors of late, who have served the usual period in India without openly disobeying orders, that have not received very handsome pensions on their retirement; and not being selected from the men of large fortune, so much as from those of good family and upright, honourable principles, the prolonged enjoyment of a most liberal salary is an object of some importance to them. The governor being thus wisely secured in the interests of the company, the vote or influence of a commander in chief is only a secondary consideration; but, to prevent their coalescing and pulling together, a bait (which has always hitherto been taken) is thrown between them—I mean the patronage of army appointments and commands.

Although, to some minds, this assertion would appear ridiculous, if not fabulous, yet, so long as human nature prompts every one to acquire ascendancy and influence over his fellow creatures, so long will rivalry, on

even inferior points, cause first a coolness, and then an opposition, if not open hostility, between two great men. One fights for what he deems his rights, and the other for every thing dear to his dignity, vanity, or greatness ; for a Commander in chief, *deprived* of the patronage of the army, becomes, in time of peace, a mere adjutant-general to the government : but, *with it*, he may be a military despot, who can underhandedly impede, instead of strengthening, the powers of government ; and can, by secret influence, undermine the basis, instead of assisting in the repairs, of its superstructure, when in a state of dilapidation.

We, therefore, constantly see a new Commander in chief, cordially welcomed to the government-house on his arrival, perhaps by an old acquaintance ; where he does not, however, visit above a fortnight, before his pockets are filled with protests and minutes for council, opposing every measure of the Governor.

But, as he could do nothing alone, his next step is to sound the *civil* counsellors ; *one* of whom he generally finds “ in opposition.” From him he accomplishes his education, in all the little chicanery of local intrigue ; and should he have succeeded in bullying the Governor out of the army patronage (and this generally depends upon *nerve*), their united opposition becomes very troublesome, if not formidable, to every measure of government : for the Commander in chief is taught, that his duty, as a member of council, is not confined to subjects of a military nature ; but that it is highly proper for him, if only to keep up his own

importance, to give a dissentient minute upon any measure, whether relative to war, revenue, or commerce:—in short, that no resolution of government should be allowed to pass, without his strictures upon it; which, whether well or ill founded, will oblige his opponent to spend much time in answering his objections. Such is the nature of a *systematic* opposition; which, although it may not totally obstruct, will generally annoy, impede, and harass, the Governor and his supporters.

As the duties of a Commander in chief are not of so responsible a nature as those of a governor, it would appear, that less pains are taken in the selection to fill this employment. The principal features in the character, as a recommendation, seem to be, that he should have served in the Guards, at some, if not a late, period of his life; that he should be in debt, or at least needy circumstances; and that he should never, previously, have performed any military exploit, to raise his name as a good officer; or have gained any experience in the service of his country.

This may, perhaps, wear the appearance of a jest; but the grounds of my assertion may be ascertained by enquiry, and will convince you of the probability of what I have advanced in the former part of this letter; viz. that in England you do not care at all about us, and think any thing good enough for us.

You have long been accustomed to read of brilliant military achievements in the East Indies, constantly attended with so much success, that you look upon

them, now, as matters of course; and the few people who do believe them to have been related with accuracy, always think we are more indebted to the imbecility of our enemies, than to any prowess of our own. When, however, we have lost India, and have nothing else to shew, then will the history of its conquest by Britons, be treasured up as a sacred relic. You may, possibly, be urged by more generous motives than those here assigned, in sending out to us, as commanders in chief, men who have unfortunately lost, or who had never gained, military credit, in any other quarter of the globe; and may suppose, as instanced by the “good Cornwallis,” that misfortune in the western, may be converted into good fortune in the eastern, hemisphere. It has been essential to our interests, however, that the fortune of a campaign has depended more upon the high discipline and bravery of our troops and subordinate officers, than the abilities or generalship of our commanders in chief, since the days of Clive and Coote.

I must now proceed to speak of the two civil members of council, who are understood to be nominated immediately by the Court of Directors, and to take, consequently, a lively interest in their concerns. These are generally selected from among the senior civil servants of the Company, who, having been employed from twenty to thirty years in India, may naturally be expected to have gained a most profound knowledge of every branch of the service through which they have gradually risen. It is accordingly their duty to give advice

and counsel to the governor (who is generally a stranger in India), with openness and candour, upon every subject; but particularly upon all branches of local finance, revenue, and commerce, with which they ought to be so intimately acquainted.

This, however, we seldom find to be the case; for the moment a good revenue or commercial servant is promoted to a seat in council, he becomes a politician; and looking upon any particular branch as a subject now beneath his attention, he enters into all the intrigues and little cabals of the party he may have espoused in politics: for, although you would suppose it his interest and inclination to stand neuter, if only to retain his proper weight and influence in council, yet the very injunctions, if not orders, of the Court of Directors, almost prevent his doing so, when they complain, in their public dispatches, “that, *now-a-days*, “the Court no longer receives that voluminous and intelligent information it used formerly to do, from the “dissentient minutes and opinions of the members of “Council.”

Another circumstance, however, may account for these members over-stepping the more limited duties of counsellors, and entering into all cabals and party intrigues; I mean the expectation, though distant, of succeeding to the chair themselves, and becoming Governors. This, therefore, obliges them to carry their politics to Leadenhall-street, the seat of interest most likely to secure this grand object of their desires.

We consequently find intrigues carried on across the

ocean, and these must be managed with no inferior abilities or cunning. It is not sufficient for you publicly to oppose the governor and his party, if you find the directors against him; but you must secretly convey to their ears, and through them to the public, every insinuation and anecdote that gets wind: the length of the journey it has to travel, will, in the minds of most persons, tend sufficiently to establish its truth, or, at least, give it an air of strong probability.

The Court are seldom so unanimous among themselves, as to have *every* ear closed to misrepresentation or intrigue; but, should it happen thus, you have always the Board of Controul, or Ministry, to whom every information will be acceptable. The only difficulty is, in playing your cards publicly in India; so that they may agree with your private game in England: for it invariably happens, that when one of the civil members of council votes with the governor, the other will vote in opposition, which may bring you into a dilemma.

Thus I have endeavoured to shew you, that the superintendence of our eastern affairs, which appears so complicated at head-quarters in Europe, is continued by a system much more so, on its arrival in India; and hence branch off all the subordinate streams of party, into their different channels.

It is not in my power to describe the action and reaction of these cabals; but nothing is done without them. There has been, for many years, such a succession of Scotch and Irish at the head of the Board

of Controul, both as governors and commanders in chief in India, that the country is inundated with persons from those parts of the united kingdom; and they are not only set, but kept, in motion, pulling for lucrative commands and appointments, according to the quarter from which the person in power derives his birth. In these realms, we never hear of your Portlands, your Bedfords, or your Richmonds; but, whether you are acquainted or connected with the wife of the private secretary to the Governor or Commander in chief—of the adjutant or quarter-master-general of the army—the chief secretary to government:—but, above all, should you have been at a country dancing-school with the wife or daughter of any person in power, your fortune is sure of being made. In short, we have as many families and compacts as you have; and with as many petty and local interests, continually playing into each other's hands, or wrangling for the loaves and fishes. And, indeed, there is little prospect, under the present regime, of seeing any stop put to these cabals; for, whilst every ship from Europe brings out an investment of sisters and female cousins, to supply recruits to the fading branches of each family interest, you have only the option left you, of marrying into a league of Bond-street, *versus* Leadenhall-street, or of remaining an insulated bachelor, without an appointment: for, since the days of the old court of France, no part of the world has been so famous for petticoat interest as India is at this very moment.

Having already stated that the governor is, in gene-

ral, a total stranger to India and its concerns, it will naturally excite your attention, to know how he manages on his first arrival: for, until he has gained much local experience by practice, it is impossible he can act right from his own intuitive theory, let him be ever so clever. Two ways alone are left him; either to throw himself into the arms of one of the cabals and act as they direct him, or to stand aloof from all parties, do his own business, and blunder through it, sometimes right, but more frequently wrong, until he is, at last, master of the subject. This, you will say, is a cruel alternative to leave to a man's choice; and the mode he adopts at first, generally marks his character throughout his future government. The difficulty is to steer a medium course, so that, without being led into error by the advice of a faction, you do not also fall into it, by mistrusting that of every one. I scarcely know, which of these extremes may be most prejudicial, although examples have occurred of both, where the best possible intentions have actuated each governor.

It might naturally strike you, that a governor would have nothing to do, but to follow the advice of the two members of council, appointed by the supreme government at home, to act confidentially and in concert with him; but what must be his surprize to find, that a measure proposed or appointed by one of the members is opposed by the other, and each of their arguments supported by such plausibility, as still to leave the propriety of the measure in the greatest doubt

and perplexity. This is the moment for deciding which counsellor you will have to support you, and which to oppose you ; for to act in concert with both, has hitherto proved utterly impossible.

A Commander in chief, who has never before served in India, has just as much difficulty to encounter as a new governor ; but not so much responsibility in the measures to be adopted.

A total stranger to the service at the head of which he is placed, and generally prejudiced against a system which he finds to differ so materially from what he has been accustomed to in Europe, it is a long time before he can be induced even to read the code of regulations, sanctioned by the long experience of many able officers, and grounded upon the system introduced by Sir Archibald Campbell.

On his first arrival, it appears to him, that nothing is done as it ought to be ; and prejudice is so strong in the breasts of many men, that long experience is required to overcome it.

The principal object, therefore, of a commander in chief's attention, on his first arrival in India, ought to be, the conquest of his own prejudices : but these, alas ! are too often strengthened and confirmed. The whole tenor of his education at home, has served to instil into his mind, the idea, that an officer, if not attached to the Guards, or at least to the *regulars*, is worthy of no respect in a military point of view ; notwithstanding such officer might possess the greatest abilities, and have had them improved by the longest

experience in foreign service. All the best qualities of a soldier are, in his mind, washed away by the simple sentence, "he is not in the regulars." Should he himself never have quarrelled on duty with a militia or fencible officer in Europe, he has heard of such disputes at the mess, and been brought up in the idea, that an officer of the regulars is degraded by "army rank," being given to those who are not.

On the arrival in India, therefore, of a Commander in chief, with such rooted prejudices, what must be his indignation to find himself (as he will call it) in the hands of Company's officers?—for, besides having to conduct every *combined* operation of, and communication with, the army (King's and Company's) through the adjutant and quarter-master-general, he finds his public council also composed of Company's officers: the military board, of which he is president, consisting of the adjutant-general, quarter-master-general, military auditor-general, the commandant of artillery, and chief engineer, of the coast army. And what will appear yet more monstrous is, that a measure which he proposes to this board, may be carried against him by the votes of his own staff, (as they may be called), the adjutant and quarter-master-general of the army; and these officers, being appointed by the government, and not removeable at the instigation or pleasure of the Commander in chief, he has no power to deter them from voting against him. His alternative is, that the proposition of the military board cannot, in any matter of moment, be carried into effect until confirmed by go-

vernment, which will seldom be done unless recommended by the Commander in chief at the council board. Some Commanders in chief have, therefore, wisely appointed the next senior member to officiate as vice-president of the military board; and reserved to themselves the option of opposing, or recommending, the proposition, in their places at the supreme board of council.

The Commander in chief has yet, however, met with nothing to mitigate his prejudices against the Company's army; but much to irritate them, in the independence which is universally shewn by their officers. He can find little assistance from his own immediate family, staff of secretaries, and aids-du-camp, who are generally brought out with him, and selected from his own, or his wife's, needy and junior relations in the army at home, and who can therefore give him no local assistance; their abilities and qualifications generally extending no farther than to the inditing of a card of invitation, or copying of more confidential correspondence; with a talent at singing and buffoonery, for domestic entertainment, and the amusement of the children.

Thus finding he must remain in the hands of people independent of his own will, or attempt to overreach those he cannot over-rule, the Commander in chief is obliged to look about him for some wily adviser; and generally picks up one who has enjoyed the confidence of former Commanders in chief, who had similar battles to fight before him. You will, therefore,

frequently see a man of this kind (generally from the North) who has sneaked into the confidence of successive commanders, and looks upon them now as his proper prey. His qualifications are, a thorough knowledge of the mode in which other Commanders in chief have opposed the governor on certain points; a head, well stocked with formulæ of protests and dissentient minutes for all occasions; an acquaintance with the darkest shades of every person's character; and a method of bringing them to notice in the most good-natured manner. He thus becomes a kind of prompter behind the scenes; and will, not unfrequently, condemn in company, what he has recommended in secret; especially if he can throw the odium of the measure upon any other officer, who is supposed to influence the opinion of the Commander in chief.

I have now given you a sketch of the principal features in this government; and probably you may think, that short remedies might be applied to the two last untoward cases, by appointing a governor and Commander in chief from the Company's civil and military servants, who have had such great opportunities of gaining local knowledge: but, by such a system, I am afraid you would only make things worse.

I have already pointed out the bad effects of a civilian being promoted to council only; and it appears, from experience, with a few exceptions, that they do not promise fair to make better governors. In former days, to be sure, we read of the affairs of India being conducted in the most honourable and upright

manner, as well as with the greatest ability, by civil servants; but, alas! as our territory and dominions in the East have encreased, I fear our virtue has diminished and degenerated. Venality is the principal thing to be guarded against in a governor; for when the fountain-head is corrupt, what can be expected from the stream? He must not only be pure himself, but be strict in seeing that others, in authority, are so also. This is a most laborious task, and if too strictly undertaken, will cause a certain degree of odium to be cast upon the measures of the best of governors. He must therefore be free from even the *suspicion* of venality himself, to enforce purity upon others.

Now the advantage of a governor, direct from Europe, over one who has been brought up from the age of seventeen in India, is most obvious; but in nothing more so, than in his independence upon all private friendships, or public factions. I do not, however, think so much is to be feared from these, as from the connexions formed by a civilian with a set of native Dubashes; for where will you find one without these harpies attached to him? You may know, at some distance, whether a governor is from the Company's service, or otherwise, by the number of Dubashes' palanqueens near the government-house; but, if you please, we will trace the connexion to its source.

This governor came out a writer to India some twenty-five years ago; very young, and with all the fashionable vices, or follies, flowing in his veins. The temperature of his blood is inflamed by the heat of the

climate. He launches out into all the extravagancies in which his youthful companions, of the *former season*, are ready to instruct and initiate him. He has it instilled into his mind, that his *dignity* requires him to keep up large establishments of horses and servants; that his dignity also requires him to spend every rupee he can borrow, without dreaming of the time or mode of re-payment. He soon runs through all the money for which he had a letter of credit on some respectable banking-house, and he finds, on drawing his pay at the end of the month, that it scarcely amounts to the paltry sum of ten pounds sterling.

Cash must be supplied, and he has been hitherto so extravagant, that he is ashamed to apply again to the European banker. The persons, however, who led him into extravagance, now administer to his pecuniary wants, and introduce him to a Dubash. It will seem incredible to you, but, after five or six years service in India, it is nothing extraordinary, to find young civilians indebted to their Dubashes from 20, 30, to 40,000 rupees: for, so long as they can get money easily, they never think of retrenching their expences. The motive, however, which induces the Dubash to lend his money in this adventurous species of bottomry, is grounded on a long experience of its advantages. If the young man lives (and one Dubash has many strings to his bow), he is sure of being repaid; not only with compound interest at 12 per cent. but of making an immense fortune besides. The young civilian rises, in time, through the degrees of the line chosen by him,

until he becomes either collector of the revenues of a province, or commercial resident of a factory; and now the Dubash's opportunity offers: he becomes, himself, the real collector or resident; and the poor dupe has nothing else to do, and probably no other inclination, than to sign his name to accounts of receipts and disbursements.

If the Dubash suspects his master of being too clever for him, and that he will discharge him when the debt is paid, a thousand artifices are practised; and whether the master is clever or a fool, you seldom see a man, who at all employs or gives his confidence to a Dubash, that does not become a compleat dupe to the latter. The Dubash will link his own character and affairs so intimately with his master's, that there is no getting rid of him: nay, the climate of India renders it too difficult a task, for a man, accustomed to have his business performed by one of these people, to discharge him at all, however willing he may be to do so; and the only consequence would be, if he did so, that he must afterwards probably employ a greater rogue than the one he has just discharged. The Dubash, therefore, with all his relations, whom he has got into dependent situations under him, are fixed to the civilian for life; and thus stick to him, whether at the head of a factory, or at the head of the government.

A system of *dubashery*, in the latter case, is a danger, of all others, to be guarded against:—but, lest you should suppose I have given too high a colour to this picture of a civilian's life and education, I refer

you to the elegant detail of the Marquis Wellesley, in the minute of council, wherein he depicts the evil consequences of the "old school" method of educating a young man for the civil service. Happily, the College of Bengal promises to remedy the evils above related; for nothing can be more obvious, than that a young man, unacquainted with the language of the district in which he is employed, must be at the mercy of some native interpreter or Dubash.

A college education is pregnant with infinite advantages to a coast civilian; for here several languages are spoken, and the difficulty to be overcome is, not that of learning *all* these languages, but of commencing upon *one* of them, *without being obliged to do so*. A tolerable proficiency in one, will lead to a practical and progressive knowledge of the others, without laborious attention. Heretofore, the number of the languages on the coast* was reckoned a good excuse for not studying any of them; and was, therefore eagerly seized by the civilians of the "old school." From the zeal, ability, and extraordinary emulation of the young men already educated at, and sent from, the college

* The vernacular languages on the Coast are these:—

1. The Gentoo or Telinga.
2. Tamul, or Malabars of Coromandel.
3. Canaries of Mysoor and Canara.
4. Malayala, or real Malabars (of the W. coast.)

The other languages, used in revenue and judicial affairs and correspondence, are: 1. The Duknic (Hindustanic, south of the Nerbudda). 2. Mahratta. 3. Persian. 4. Arabic.

of Fort William, there is the most confident hope, that, in a few years, the whole system of dubashery (so disgraceful to the British name and character), will be utterly abolished; and that no class of natives will be allowed to intervene, between the cultivator of the soil and the officer of Government.

If it is admitted, that the powers of Government cannot be better supported, than by the degree of respect and due estimation, in which the person at its head is held by the people governed, this will be another objection to the Company's servant (if belonging to the same presidency) being made Governor; for I need not insist, that so much respect can never be paid, by the natives, to a man, however much personal merit and ability he may possess, who has risen, amongst them, through all the inferior and subordinate degrees of office, (viz. writer, under secretary, &c.) as they would, and do entertain, for a young man of noble family, whose juvenile pranks, foibles, debts, and dubasheries, they are totally unacquainted with.

It is equally unadvisable, and almost impossible, to have a Commander in chief appointed from the officers of the Company's army, so long as it remains on its present footing: but as this does not appear to be well understood in Europe, I beg your patience whilst I attempt a detail of it.

The Company's army on the coast, consists of a corps of engineers, two battalions of artillery (natives attached,) eight regiments of native cavalry, with gallopers; a regiment of European, and twenty-three of

native, foot; having each two battalions of 1000 men strong. This is the regular (peace) establishment; and from these are officered, a troop of horse artillery, two battalions of pioneers, several of rangers or irregular corps; and the whole of the general brigade, field, cantonment, and garrison staff.

The highest rank in the Company's army is that of colonel. A cadet, on his arrival from Europe, is posted an ensign in some corps, in which he rises to the rank of major, by gradation, and without purchase; after which, he is placed on a general list of field officers, and rises no longer in the regiment, but in the line, with the field officers of the whole army, still in gradation, and without purchase.

The King grants a correspondent commission to that held in the service of the Company, which gives him rank with the regulars in India. Besides this regimental rank from the Company, confirmed by the King's commission, the Company's officers are placed on the general brevet of his Majesty's army, and rise on it to the rank of major-general. Here, however, it ceases, by request of the Company, in order that they may not lose the services of their officers, which they must otherwise do, were they promoted to be lieutenant-generals; for no staff of that rank is employed in India, except as Commanders in chief at the three presidencies.

A Company's officer, who has actually served twenty-two years in India, is entitled to retire; in Europe, if he pleases, on the full pay of the rank he may have

attained: and should he have obtained a regiment, he may enjoy the off-reckonings and emoluments of it in Europe; only with the liability to be called upon to proceed to India, if deemed expedient by the Court of Directors. Besides these indulgencies, an officer, according to his length of service, may be placed upon the pension or invalid establishment, and "remain in India;" as his health, a large family, or other conveniences may oblige or induce him. Three years for a furlough to Europe, are granted on full pay; but these are not included in the twenty-two years, which must be actually served in India, to entitle an officer to retire.

The duties of the Company's officers having been confined entirely to India, it is not to be expected that they should be acquainted so well with the various, and almost daily changes, in the principles of military science, as practised by the powers of Europe. Few things have become antiquated, of late, so soon as systems of military tactics; and the discipline and regime of a large army, in the course of a very few years, would become quite provincial, if insulated from the progressive improvements of the science, as carried on in other parts of the world. It is not necessary to instance, in proof of this, more than the dreadful annihilation of the Prussian legions, which so lately had been thought the finest troops in the universe, until attacked on new principles of the science.

So many of the King's regular troops having to act, in India, in conjunction with those of the Company,

one uniform system must be adopted; and this can only be done by bringing up the discipline of the whole, to the standard of some corps, lately arrived from Europe, of the most approved discipline.

I am no advocate for continual theoretical changes in discipline, which only harass and perplex the men; but a progressive improvement, dictated by the experience of late events, must necessarily be attended to, if only to prevent the more abrupt changes that would otherwise happen.

The present system of regimental rise in corps, which took place in the Company's army in 1800, has scarcely had time to develop its good effects on the Indian army in general, (i. e. including the establishments of Bengal and Bombay); but, upon the coast army, a total change is visibly and daily taking place. By the old system, an officer was seldom out of the rank of lieutenant, before he had served seventeen, and, not unfrequently, twenty years; whereas, at present, we see many majors (and, I believe, one lieutenant-colonel) who have obtained their rank in a period of fourteen and fifteen years of service. Cadets come out, in general, from the age of fifteen to eighteen; so that an officer has, at present, a chance of obtaining the rank of field officer before he is above thirty-two or thirty-three years of age: whereas, formerly, an officer, from the baneful effects of so long a residence in a climate uncongenial to his constitution, was more fitted for the invalid establishment, than for active service, by the time he became a field-officer; which was sel-

dom in less than twenty-five or twenty-seven years of service. If, therefore, you take up the list of the army, you may perceive, that, let their former services have been ever so brilliant under Coote and Cornwallis, and their present ability as great as can be expected; yet, from the whole of the officers at the head of the list, you could not select one capable of standing the fatigues of an active campaign: and these are not the days when an old woman in a litter, by mere scientific tactic, must inevitably gain a signal victory over an approved but youthful general. The Prussian generals have disappeared with Prussian tactics.

I must now proceed to touch upon a point of the most difficult nature, from the delicacy of the subject, and the almost impossibility of doing so without the appearance of partiality: I mean the jealousy between the King's and Company's officers, of which you must have heard so much.

I have already explained to you the notions with which a King's officer is brought up from his entrance into a military life; and the degradation he is taught to feel, at being obliged to rank along with, and not above, officers not in the regulars. On his arrival in India, it is, some how or other, a natural bias which prompts him, (and, I may say, every European, King's or Company's) to feel a sensation of repugnance, nay, little short of abhorrence, to the natives in general. Whether this has been born with us, or is the effect of education, I know not; but I can appeal, for the truth of it, to the breast of any person who has been in India. Every

thing a native does is executed exactly contrary to European ideas ; and these people are so addicted to telling the most barefaced lies, that a stranger, falling into the hands of the most villainous part of them (the Madras Dubashes) on his first arrival, is naturally confirmed in the abhorrence he has felt for them at first sight. I have seen many sensible persons who could not conquer their aversion, for a length of time, so far as even to touch the skin of a native. " Blackey," " black fellows," and " black scoundrels," are the opprobrious terms generally used in speaking of them, amongst every class of Europeans. I need not, therefore, attempt to prove, that where a whole set of people are thus held in contempt and degradation, it will not require any great provocation, enmity, or jealousy, to attach in a person's mind, or make him throw out unguardedly, in company, that an officer belonging to a corps composed of *black men*, must be greatly inferior, in every respect, to an officer in the European regular army.

This, at present, would appear to be the principal point between the two services ; for the original and real cause, upon which the enmity and jealousy first arose, was the inferiority of pay and allowances enjoyed by King's officers : but, since these allowances have been levelled, and made the same in each service, all pecuniary motives may be deemed abolished, and, with them, the *real* grounds of any jealousy.

At first sight, you would suppose, that no officer would serve with a native corps, when he could be ap-

pointed to an European regiment ; but it happens just the reverse. There are many reasons for this preference ; and, amongst the first, probably, is the little regimental duty he has to perform with a native corps. After morning parade is over, no attendance is required from the European officer, until evening again ; the Sepoys being regular, well-behaved, and little addicted to liquor. Whereas, an European barrack must be visited several stated times in the day, to see that the men are present and orderly, their victuals well dressed, and messes regular : the hospital also must be attended in the same manner ; and, probably, many times a week, a regimental court-martial requires his attendance, either as member, prosecutor, or evidence. Thus an officer, belonging to an European regiment, is frequently tied down, by his regimental duty, to the limits of the garrison or cantonment ; whilst one of a Sepoy corps, at the same station, is amusing himself in hunting, shooting, or other country diversions.

But what attaches a Company's officer, more particularly to this branch of the service is, the certain provision that is secured to him at the end of his 22 years ; and the independence he enjoys, in the mean time, upon the whim or caprice of any commanding officer, or corps, so long as he acts properly. In short, his duty is laid down by a code of regulations, and his rights and privileges are confirmed to him by the same. Here he finds nothing uncertain ; nothing, in his promotion or welfare, that can be obstructed by the hand of influence or power, so long as he does right, and

performs his duty. He feels himself acting and residing, as it were, under a republic, where the laws are defined; and not under a despotic code, which, at the malicious and ungrounded misrepresentation of a capricious and tyrannical commanding officer, may say—"be gone; I have no further occasion for your services."

This spirit of independence is the *very life and main-spring* of the Company's army; and serves, in a great measure, to mitigate a severity, which, of all the known military services in the world, this army alone labours under:—I mean the total want of *stimulating honours*.

Posterity will scarcely believe, when they read the Military History of England, (which, with the exception of Egypt and Maida, has, for so long a period, been confined totally to India), that, during the conquest of so large an Empire, out of 2,500 officers, the smile of royal favour has not deigned to alight upon one single or solitary instance of the many recorded brilliant actions of the Company's officers, in the shape of the lowest degree of honour; although, within the same period, so plentifully displayed upon the shoulders of Lord-Mayors and Sheriffs!

The two reasons I have mentioned above, present independence and future provision, prevent the Company's officer, however, from "taking thought for the morrow," in pecuniary matters. So long as he can make the two ends of the month meet, he keeps horses, dogs, and servants, to the utmost farthing; and he cannot, luckily, get much in debt, for no one

will trust him: A Dubash would refuse *him* a pagoda, when he would lend a young civilian a thousand; because the chances of future profit to the lender, are in that proportion.

This mode of living, and apparent extravagance, is calculated, however, to gain him the envy, if not the enmity, of King's officers; who are induced to take that for pride, vanity, and affected superiority, which really proceeds from carelessness and want of thought.

The mode of living, of a subaltern in a King's regiment, is quite the reverse. The benefit of having a mess, allows him to keep only one servant, to six kept by the Company's officer. The other parts of his establishment retain the same proportion; and, if out on an airing, or hunting, on a tattoo poney, he is nearly ridden over by the subaltern of a Sepoy corps, who is mounted, probably, on a fine Arabian, he must *feel*, though he will have too much sense to complain, that a comparison may be drawn between them, by the natives, in colours not the most favourable to himself.

His reasons, however, for economy, are more laudable, than those of the Company's officer are for extravagance:—obliged, probably, to purchase his Ensigncy originally, if not his Lieutenancy also; and, having to depend upon his own economy for the purchase of a Company, no wonder he should reduce his establishment to as low an expence as possible. He does not know how long his regiment may remain in India; he has nothing to look up to but purchased promotion, and is, therefore, contented with the com-

forts, whilst neglecting the luxuries and extravagancies of an Indian life. Should he have the additional inducement to economy, of an aged mother, or unprotected sisters, in Europe, to provide for, who is there but must respect such motives; and where the heart that would insult rather than admire them? Nevertheless, his apparent aversion to enter into society or expensive pursuits, may, not unfrequently, be mistaken by the Company's officer, for moroseness and unwillingness to associate with him, and hence may arise a mutual misunderstanding and coolness.

In most of the King's regiments of foot, serving in India, you will find three, four, or five officers, who have risen from the ranks; and few of the subalterns (after the regiment has been a few years in India) are men of fortune. The nature of the service will account for this. Such young men of fortune, as originally came out with the regiment, have either purchased promotion, or, probably, returned to Europe; and from whence can the casualties be filled up? In Europe, a parent prefers placing his son in a regiment quartered on the spot, or in some part of Great Britain. The casualties must therefore be filled up in India; but as, from the strictness of the Company's orders, few young men are to be found here, who are not in their employment, the vacant commission must be given to some well-behaved serjeant; some clerk of a compting-house; or young lad, who has run away from an Indiaman purposely to remain in India.

The origin of the Company's officer affords a quite

different picture. The younger son of some respectable, but numerous, family, and not unfrequently of a tradesman, connected with the Directors, and persons about the India-House, is sent out a cadet to India, merely *to be got rid of*, and is never expected to do any thing more than support himself. If he lives, and behaves himself well, he is handsomely provided for, at least ; and, should he die before he has served the appointed term of retirement (as eighteen out of twenty do), he has, at any rate, been no burthen to his friends in Europe, except in his first equipment and passage to India.

Another point, which has sometimes been urged by King's officers, and consequently tended to keep up animosity, is equally devoid of any real ground of jealousy :—it is, that the King's commission to the Company's officers being only local in India, when they return to Europe, they are not entitled to the appellation of the rank they hold, nor even to wear their uniforms. This, however, is equally silly, as a cause of enmity, on both sides ; for, it has been proved, that whenever, and wherever, a Company's corps is employed *out of India*, the officers' commissions are as valid as *in India* ; and the case I particularly allude to, as having happened lately (the native corps employed in Egypt, and on the shores of the Mediterranean), having been decided by a King's officer, who, during his early residence in India, was one of the most violent promoters of the original jealousy between the King's and Company's, ought to be looked on as final and satisfactory.

As; therefore, an officer does not lose his rank, whilst serving with his corps in any part of the world, and as he cannot be called upon to serve without his corps, what is the object of dispute? the appellation?—if so, the point is easily settled; for, if it be customary to address a Russian, French, Swedish, or American officer in England, by the appellation of “Captain,” or “Colonel,” can it, with the least shadow of propriety, be refused to an Englishman, holding in his pocket the commission, as such, signed by the King? an Irish Earl might as well be addressed plain Mr.—on landing at Pool, or a Scotch Duke on passing the Tweed.

I have purposely mentioned these ideal motives of enmity (though a majority of officers, in both the services, would be ashamed to acknowledge their existence), that you may perceive there is no *real* ground of enmity or jealousy between the two services. That jealousy, however, still exists, and is kept alive on any ground, is not, I solemnly believe, the fault of either branch of the service; but of those whose duty it was, to have done all in their power to quench the embers of contention, instead of adding fuel to them.

When a Commander in chief takes every opportunity of shewing partiality to one branch, and of degrading the other, by his private, no less than his public conduct, towards them; when he enters upon a systematic plan of setting them at variance, and encouraging jealousy as much as he can, by giving every staff appointment and command, worth holding, to the party he espoused

when he allows reports to go from his own family, *uncontradicted*, that he is ordered, from the Horse-guards, to disgust the Company's officers, as a means of making them more readily enter into the King's service, should an opportunity occur; and, finally, when every measure he enforces may be brought as an undeniable proof of an organized system, conformable to these reports (whether true or false);—I say, under these circumstances, is it to be expected, that the jealousies, which had nearly expired when he arrived in India, should be extinguished; or, rather, that they should not be brightened up into a flame?

The arrogance and overbearing insolence, of some of the favourites selected for the most important commands, has tended to complet the disgust, drafted out at head-quarters. When it is recollected, that a King's officer, only yesterday arrived in the country, may be selected, from the seniority of his commission, to command a station, at which 5 or 8,000 Sepoys may be cantoned, you would naturally suppose him diffident enough of his own *local* knowledge, to feel obliged to any Company's officer, for occasional information, on subjects, to which he must, of necessity, be a total stranger. But this, alas! is seldom the case: his pride is hurt at the idea of receiving information from a *Company's* officer, on any military question. He has himself commanded a "corps of blacks," in the West-Indies; or, has seen a corps of Turks, or Albanians, in Egypt. Hence the arrogance of a reply to a lieutenant-colonel, of 25 years standing, who commanded

a corps of Sepoys, and asked a King's colonel (commanding the station) leave, for his Sepoys to attend an annual Hindoo festival; urging, when this was denied, that it had been an *invariable custom* to grant the leave, for the 25 years he had been in the service:—"Then," replied the commandant (who was not three years old when the lieutenant-colonel entered the army), "I, Theodosius Pompadore Mount-Razor, colonel, commanding the *****, do now abolish, and put a stop to the said custom, in its 26th year!" turning upon his heel, on finishing the sentence.

Is such conduct likely to gain the confidence and good-will of an army, (with which you must act on service,) or to create its disgust? How different is it from that of General Wellesley or Lord Lake, who well knew the value of gaining, by conciliation, the confidence, esteem, and gratitude of men who had to fight under them: and yet, what officers ever arrived in India, originally, with stronger prejudices against the Company's army?—But they had sense enough to sacrifice them for the benefit of the public service.

What, however, might not be expected from ignorant and upstart *petty* commandants, when the Commander in chief himself, could interrupt an officer, who was assuring him of the fidelity and loyalty of the Sepoy corps he commanded, with these words—"Sir, to cut short, I'll tell you what it is,—I don't believe one word that you, or any other officer, may tell me, respecting the fidelity of the corps he, himself, commands!" Was not this, (besides putting a stop to all confidence, by giving

the lie direct) nearly as much as to say, that there was as little loyalty amongst the European officers, as amongst the Sepoys; and that the former winked at, if they did not encourage, the latter, in disaffection? Nay, an officer, who had, in a private letter, given information to head quarters, of the objections then making by the Sepoys against the turbans, was accused of having instigated them; as the public objections, *afterwards*, corresponded with the private letter.

It would appear, in furtherance of the premeditated system from the Horse Guards, as if an unity of interests had been suspected at head-quarters, by the assiduity with which the European officers were invariably attempted to be degraded in the eyes of the Sepoys. At the cantonments where none but Company's troops were stationed, King's officers were industriously sought after, whose rank might entitle them to supersede all the lieutenant-colonels commanding the native corps. No class of people in the world are so susceptible of these impressions as the natives of India; and to withdraw confidence from a commanding officer, is always the surest mode of withdrawing the respect of the Sepoys from him also. It was the common talk and observation amongst them, that *now-a-days* they were always commanded by King's officers, who did not understand their customs; and that their own officers had no weight or consequence left, even sufficient to obtain them justice when they were aggrieved.

Added to this, a most severe system of discipline was put into the hands of the Sepoy officers, to be enforced

upon their men ; and orders were given, of a nature so repugnant to the prejudices of their cast, that many officers commanding corps, declared they would stand the decision of a general court-martial, rather than enforce them ; especially that respecting the clipping of the Sepoys' wiskers. Indeed, very few commanding officers had even ventured to inform their men that such an order existed ; and this will account for its not generally appearing in the list of grievances, at which a *great person* has endeavoured to exult ; not surmising, that the order had been industriously concealed from the knowledge of the Sepoys.

Unfortunately, however, too many of the Company's officers, infatuated with the *mania* of drill, and instigated by expected approbation from head-quarters, most eagerly adopted every proposed alteration of dress, and severity of discipline. There are instances (few, thank God !) of Sepoy corps having been kept out at drill, *thrice* a day, for months together : viz. from four in the morning till past nine ; again, in the barrack-yard, from noon till two ; and from four in the afternoon till dark : thus leaving little time for the Sepoy to clean his arms, or dress his victuals, and none for domestic or other comfort. You would scarcely believe too, that the *commissioned* native officers, in one of the corps which afterwards mutinied in Vellore, had usually been punished, for slight negligence at drill, by being obliged to walk up and down, in the heat of the sun, for so many hours a day, with a musket on their shoulders. But what proves that too great severity of discipline,

was one cause of disaffection, is the circumstance of those corps, known to be under the severest discipline, being those alone, almost, that *openly* shewed it.

I have already hinted to you, that a report was current, throughout the coast army, that the Commander in chief had been *instructed* to carry on a premeditated system of injury and annoyance, to the feelings and interests of the Company's officers. The report originated in his own family, and no pains were taken to contradict it; although every overt act of his, shewed his conduct to be guided by it, and every general order to breathe its spirit.

Under the mask of reprimand, to a Company's officer of no great character (whose part, he well knew, would not be taken by the army at large), an opportunity was seized, of striking, in general orders, a deadly blow, at the very existence and root of what the Company's army deemed its "*Magna Charta*," viz. that of rising in gradation, *by seniority*, uninfluenced by the whim or caprice of any Commander in chief.

A perusal of the general orders of the day, will sufficiently shew, that no opportunity has been lost of holding up the Company's service to disrepute and opprobrium, when no means presented themselves of doing it a fatal injury. Even clemency, lodged in the hands of a Commander in chief, as the most sacred of his privileges, has been converted into an instrument to disgrace the service; by its being shewn to officers dismissed for crimes which rendered them unworthy of commissions in *any* service. Was not, I ask, the main-guard

of Vellore, mounted, on the night of the fatal massacre, by an officer, who had *thrice* received clemency for being “drunk on duty;” and was he not released from arrest, by orders from head-quarters, the day before, for the same crime? Thus, even *mercy*, that brightest jewel in the crown of royalty, may become a thorn, when confided to unworthy hands.

It was not long, however, before an opportunity occurred of throwing off the mask altogether, by proposing to the government, to appoint, as deputy quarter-master-general of the Company’s army, not only a King’s officer, but, to their greater degradation, a *foreigner*, and that of the worst cast—a *French Creole*!

Nearly about the same period, information was received from Bengal, that similar instructions had arrived from the Horse Guards to Lord Lake, directing him to appoint a King’s officer, quarter-master-general of the Company’s troops in Bengal; but that (his lordship, having shewn the absurdity of the measure, during the existing organization of the two armies), Colonel C—had returned, in disgust, to Europe; although holding a sinecure appointment of nearly £3,000 a-year. It is impossible for me to say, what credit ought to be given to these reports; but, the circumstance of allowing them to be circulated, both in the King’s and Company’s army, and *without contradiction*, must, whether true or false, have very much tended to keep alive, that jealousy between the two services, which it was the duty of every good officer to have suppressed.

Whether my suggestion, that the commander in

chief suspected a junction of interests between the European officers and Sepoys, may be well or ill-grounded, it is certain, that the subsequent massacre at Vellore, must have opened his eyes to its truth.— There are only certain bounds to which a system of injustice and oppression can be carried, without provoking resistance; and, although I am of opinion, that those bounds, were very nearly reached, yet I have too strong a degree of confidence in the fidelity and loyalty of the Company's officers on the coast, even to allow an idea to enter my mind, that they would have made any resistance to this system, but through the proper channel of obtaining public justice. This does not, however, lighten the burthen from the shoulders of those, who appear to have urged measures to these extremes; and who would have been responsible for events, that might, in *possibility*, have happened.

From the dreadful embarrassment of government, in suppressing the ill-conducted and ill-timed measures of the disaffected Sepoys alone, you may readily imagine, and tremble at, what might have ensued, had the European officers (which, God forbid!) been driven to join them in throwing off the tyranny of military despotism and degradation. Though possessing every facility in carrying on their measures with alacrity and promptitude, by having all the post-offices, magazines, revenues and supplies, under their controul, the dispersed and scattered disposition of the few King's regiments was such, that a junction of any two of them

could not have been effected; and they must, in succession, have laid down their arms, or have been starved! The consequences are evident: but the good people of England would not have been content to gape, as at present, and ask, "What is the matter? Is it a *turban* or a *whisker*?"

You will, no doubt, have heard a variety of reports respecting the origin of the late disaffection, throughout the coast army; but the subject, instead of being elucidated by the voluminous proceedings of investigations and packed committees, appears to me to have only been buried in greater obscurity, and that purposely: although so many declarations have been made, that nothing was more sincerely desired, than a fair and open investigation.

The government (of which the commander in chief is a member) had early appointed a sworn commission, of a general officer, president, and six members, of the most upright and disinterested characters in the civil and military services (King's and Company's), who were ordered to Vellore, to investigate the subject, and take examinations upon oath. This, however, does not appear to have satisfied the commander in chief, who appointed a military committee, consisting of officers on the spot, mostly engaged, one way or another, in the late transactions; and who being, consequently, parties, ought not to have been judges. As no oaths were administered, either to the members or to the witnesses called upon by this committee, you need not be surprized at the mass of incongruous matter

collected upon their proceedings; more especially as, in addition to hearsay evidence, *private examinations* and reports, of persons *not members* of the committee, were recorded on the proceedings, with the same confidence, as if they had been publicly taken before the members. When you recollect, that so many persons had their own conduct to justify out of these materials, you may guess that their reports of *private examinations* were not always scrupulously correct. Nay, you will see the confession of the principal conspirator recorded, as taken down in the prison, by an officer belonging to one of the corps engaged in the massacre; and who did not (sufficiently for such a delicate purpose) understand the language of the prisoner: whilst it would have been so easy to have had the confession taken before a magistrate, or the sworn commissioners; or even before the military committee. But, in the suspicious way it was taken, you will see it quoted and relied upon by the commander in chief, as a most authentic and important document; although the prisoner, when led out to execution, died with the sentiments he had always professed, and had sworn to maintain, viz. "that he would suffer death, rather than the disgrace of wearing the hat."

You will also perceive, that the commander in chief, (in a curious paper, circulated privately as a defence), alluding to the proceedings of the Vellore commission, calls it, "the *defective* report" of the commissioners: but, after this, would you believe, that the causes from which the defect, if any, arose, were occasioned by

sentries being posted to prevent communication between them and the witnesses? If you are thus incredulous, I refer you to the almost daily correspondence, on the subject of this grievance, between the commissioners and the commandant of the fortress; which, I have no doubt, will be published, with other documents.

I have already said, that the orders termed "obnoxious," were not generally made known to the Sepoys; they cannot, therefore, be brought as the cause of the late mutinies. Neither can the turban be given as the sole cause; but, that the latter was the occasion of the general disaffection of the army, and of the immediate massacre at Vellore, cannot be denied by the most hardy advocate of any party: and that it was the watch-word, and link, which connected the discordant interests of cast, between Mussulmans, Gentoos, Malabars, and Pariahs, has been proved by every witness examined on the occasion, (several hundreds in number), and by almost every line of the curious paper, styled "The Commander in Chief's Defence." Although we have seen frequent instances of open mutiny in native corps, caused by a more trivial alteration of dress, yet, at other times, and under other circumstances, I have little doubt, but the turban in question, with trifling alteration, might have been introduced into the army without a murmur. It is the *forcible mode* of introduction that I condemn; for this, I have no hesitation in asserting, was one of the most active causes, and even the immediate occasion, of the mutinies. Whoever is in the least acquainted with the

prejudices of the human mind, will be aware, that, to endeavour to overcome them *by force*, is the most unavailing of all possible methods; especially when social, are blended with religious, prejudices.

We have seen the Mussulman, Hindoo, and Pariah, as soldiers, *dressed alike*, standing *touching each other*, in the ranks of a battalion: we have seen the same classes throw off their clothes, and work in the trenches; and we have seen them voluntarily enter *on board a ship*, and serve on distant expeditions. Nothing, however, could be more repugnant to their religious and domestic prejudices, as citizens, in strict conformity to cast, than these acts. But, will any one venture to tell me, we could have overcome these prejudices by force? No, it has been effected by conciliation and persuasion. It is a sacrifice they have made to us, in return for our having shewn them, for a series of years, that we regarded and respected what they deemed essential points of cast and religion, *as citizens*, that they thus have dispensed with the observation of some of them, *as soldiers*. But will this voluntary concession, in some points, authorize us to enforce it in all others? The esteem and veneration in which they *formerly* held European officers, had tended, in the greatest measure, to make them listen to any alteration of dress, which facilitated the execution of their military duties; and it had been carried to such a length, by this system of conciliation, from the loose dress formerly and originally worn, that little difference was now per-

ceptible, between the dress of a European and native soldier, except in the turban.

For many years, every battalion had a turban of its own pattern ; but it being deemed, at head-quarters, that one uniform turban would improve the general appearance of the whole army, a pattern was approved of, and established in general orders of the 15th of March, 1797, which has ever since been in use, throughout the army, with the exception of two corps. Lately, however, such a system of innovation had pervaded the precincts of head-quarters, that *this* turban was not deemed appropriate, and another pattern was consequently established.

Every attempt at improvement in the dress or discipline of an army, is to be considered as very laudable : but, in this instance, it would certainly have been prudent, to consider the consequences of forcing a new pattern, (which was as nearly a drummer's cap, as could be made with blue cloth, instead of felt or leather,) upon an army of forty thousand men, when they openly came forward and declared, that to wear it would disgrace them in the eyes of their families and casts ; that they would suffer death rather than wear it ; that they had fought and conquered for the Company, from childhood, in their old turbans, and were ready to do so still ; but that they could not, without disgrace and loss of cast, wear the new turban, from its resemblance to a hat and drummer's cap. These sentiments were not concealed, but openly expressed and avowed, and reported to head-quarters about the 6th of May, being

two months previous to the massacre at Vellore. The consequence was, that nineteen men were seized, and sent down from Vellore, under a guard of dragoons, to be tried at Madras : two were sentenced one thousand lashes, and the rest five hundred each, for thus openly declaring, that *religious prejudice forbade their wearing turbans of the prescribed pattern.*

Notwithstanding this severity, and the commander in chief's official declaration, that " he would consider the smallest hesitation, on the part of the native commissioned officers, in making up, and immediately wearing the new turban, as a sufficient ground for their being dismissed the service, in general orders, without a court martial ;" yet every day brought to light further symptoms of discontent and dissatisfaction, if not of mutiny.

Notwithstanding the commander in chief's assertion, (in the curious paper above alluded to) that he heard no more of the discontents, until the *end* of June, yet we find, on the *twenty-first* of June, a Subadar was actually dismissed the service, without a court-martial, in general orders, and at the *recommendation* of the commander in chief; not indeed for refusing to wear the turban himself, but for not exerting himself to compel the Sepoys of his corps to wear it.

The contagion had now spread its secret influence throughout the army ; and as all public redress was denied, the Sepoys had nothing left, but to try underhand measures, to prevent the disgrace (real or fictitious) with which they deemed themselves threatened.

The commander in chief had taken the sentiments of a committee, formed of experienced officers, whether there were *real* grounds of an objection against the turban or not; and from what I can learn, the court expressed its opinion nearly in these words: "that the objection made by the Sepoys to the turban, originated in the jealous and lively *prejudices* of the natives in any matter respecting dress, (in this country, so intimately connected with cast and religion,) acting upon the weak minds of illiterate and uninformed men." The commander in chief appears to have considered *prejudice*, as a thing easily to be overcome, where there existed no real objection to the *materials* of which the turban was formed; such as hog's leather on the heads of Mussulmans, or cow's on those of Hindoos. He did not reflect, that the less ground there was for real objection, the stronger must be that prejudice which could oppose it; or that, had there existed any real objection, it would have been no longer a prejudice, but a real grievance that he was endeavouring to force upon them. Whatever construction or definition he might put upon the term "*prejudice*," deceived by the ominous cessation of former clamour and murmur (now subsided into secret plots,) he determined to postpone the publication of a general order, which had been proposed by *government*, to assuage the irritated feelings of the native army, under these impressions: "that since he had lost the honour of addressing government, he had heard nothing more; which led him to hope, that the disinclination to the turban

had become more feeble, or perhaps, that reports had been exaggerated." But alas! the publication of the order would now have been too late; for whilst he was penning his letter to government, at Rimdidroog, on the 9th of July, the mutineers in Vellore were only waiting for the dark cloak of night, to execute their bloody vengeance upon their innocent officers; many of whom were sympathizing with them, on the hard necessity of enforcing orders, so repugnant to the feelings of men, on whose fidelity and attachment they were to depend in the day of action.

The massacre at Vellore was the signal of a general disaffection throughout the whole army; and notwithstanding the eagerness with which it was endeavoured to blind some persons, in the belief, that the wound was only partial, and instigated by the sons of Tippo Sultan, yet the same spirit of mutiny and revolt being manifested from north to south of our possessions (in Madras, at Hyderabad, Travancour, &c. where it was not even asserted the sons of Tippo had the smallest influence,) it was soon too fully proved, that the blow had been aimed at our very existence in India.

You will have heard much odium cast upon the unfortunate family of Tippo Sultan. It was politic, no doubt, in the government, to endeavour to represent this disaffection as partial and not general, in order to keep in allegiance such of the native corps as had not yet openly proceeded to mutinous lengths. Hence the number of general orders, published to the army, intended to circulate and encourage the belief of a My-

soor plot. Those also who felt sore, at having advised the alteration of dress, and severity of discipline, or who had gone great lengths in enforcing it, could have no better cloak to hide their shame under, than the idea that the mutiny originated solely at the instigation of the Mysoor princes. But alas ! this veil was soon rent asunder, and the naked truth transpired in the general consternation and confusion; not, however, before this unfortunate family had suffered most severely, both in body and mind. The circumstance of Lieutenant-colonel Marriott, (who had the immediate political, but not military charge of the family,) being left amongst the survivors of the massacre, and his house and treasury unplundered, was reckoned a strong evidence, that the princes were at the bottom of the plot, from their known partiality towards him; notwithstanding that the very first witness examined, declared that the Prince Moiz Udeen, (the favourite hostage of Lord Cornwallis,) had refused to join the Sepoys during the mutiny, until Colonel Marriott's head should be brought him as a pledge that they would stand by him.

Every thing, in favour of the princes, was entirely over-looked; and, whilst so many tongues were exclaiming against the unwise policy of Marquis Wellesley, in allowing the princes large stipends, and in erecting them comfortable habitations, *now* denominated magnificent palaces; yet was there not one voice to whisper a simple truth, of their opening their doors to save the European soldiers during the massacre, and of their shutting and barring them against all commu-

nication with the mutineers, with the single exception of Moiz Udeen. You who have read Mr. Burke's elegant speeches on the power of Mysoor, the necessity urged by Lord Cornwallis for the reduction of it, and lastly, Lord Wellesley's solid arguments on the importance of the final conquest of Mysoor, will be surprized to hear the rage with which party zeal could blindly condemn the policy of a British government, for bestowing, from its revenues, a stipend of £5,000 a-year, for the maintenance of its heir-apparent, his mother, wife, and sixteen children.

The palaces were supposed to be full of arms, if not of concealed men; until a strict search, even of the women's apartments, in Moiz Udeen's house (where no kind of arms, but his children's daggers and wooden swords, were found), put a stop to the alarm. An accidental fire having also broken out, during the night, in the palace of old Hyder Aly Khan's widows, whilst the commander in chief was in the fort, was magnified into a designed signal of hostility on the part of the princes, although there was no possible communication between the old women and them; and, although the garrison was composed entirely of European troops. But what will not fear, assisted by party prejudice, magnify the most trifling accident into?

The official documents have been sent home some time ago, and are therefore, probably, published. If so, you will perceive that the Supreme Government of Bengal, after the fullest investigation, had declared its opinion, that eleven out of the twelve sons of Tipoo

Sultan, had not at all been implicated in the late transactions; but, on the contrary, had behaved meritoriously on that dreadful occasion.

The deliberate voice of reason had not yet gained a hearing *upon the coast*, when it was resolved, that the princes should be instantly removed to Bengal; and the execution of this resolve was confided, by government, to the hands of the commander in chief. The whole of the horse artillery, European cavalry, and infantry, that could be collected, (leaving Fort St. George garrisoned by the marines of the fleet), little inferior to the force which achieved the conquest of Mysoor, and treble to that employed by the great Coote, to relieve the garrison of Vellore, when besieged by their grandfather Hyder Aly Khan, was now embodied, to escort to Madras, a distance of eighty miles, through the heart of *our own* territories, these miserable wretches; none of whom, had they wished to escape, could have walked two miles to save their lives, owing to the effeminacy in which they had been educated.

Spirit of the noble Coote! Could thy shade have arisen from its earthly tenement, and beheld this solemn procession, as it moved slowly along, over the plains of the Carnatic, fields of thy glorious victories! what would have been thy surprise, on being told—
 “These are the descendants of thy gallant opponent, Hyder Aly Khan.” “But, where is my army? where my children? where my Sepoys?” “Look not for them! these youths are now led into captivity, and are suffer-

ing, for the *disloyalty* of the children of those men, who, first inspired, and taught to despise danger, by thy noble and undaunted spirit, have so often fought, bled, and died, to secure the glorious reward of thy approbation."

"*Disloyalty!* impossible!" "But true! Having long lost the fostering and paternal care of thy successors, they have been taught, by a series of pointed degradations, first to despise, and lastly, to assassinate, their European officers."—Sainted patron of the Sepoy army! what would have been thy indignation; and what thy imprecations on the heads of those, who could have worked such a total change, in so short a space of time!

But to return to Vellore—where, on quitting their families, the most distressing scenes, could admission have been gained, must have been witnessed. The shrieks and cries of the women and children, were distinctly heard from the palaces, by the troops drawn up, on the general parade, to escort the princes; and the dead silence that consequently pervaded the ranks, shewed the lively impression made on the minds of the very soldiers. The scene was made still more awful, by a very considerable suspense and delay; caused, as was reported, by the mothers of the *younger* princes having clung round the feet of Colonel Marriott, and refused to allow their sons to be taken away, until they had obtained his most solemn pledge, that no harm should happen to them; and that, after seeing the

princes safe to Bengal, he would return and carry themselves round by land, to join them.

The utmost sympathy of the escort, however, was absolutely necessary to the safety of the princes; for will you credit me, when I inform you, that a considerable part of it was formed by the remains of the 69th foot, who had survived the massacre of the 10th of July; and who had since been daily reminded, on the authority of the general orders read to them on parade, that the Sepoys had been entirely *instigated* to murder their comrades by the *Mysoor princes*? With such sentiments, inculcated into the already inflamed minds of men panting to revenge the murder of their fellow soldiers, nothing was wanting, you would have supposed, to the extermination of the whole family, but a plausible opportunity of putting them to death. This opportunity was soon offered; and it is more to the honour of the British soldiers, and particularly to some of the subordinate officers, than to the credit of those who could afford them such an opportunity, that it was not actually taken advantage of.

On coming to the ground of encampment, every day, during the march, thirty sentries were posted about, and with inside of, four or five small tents, in which the princes were confined. Each relief primed and loaded before their faces; and received orders, that on the slightest alarm during the night, or endeavour of any one of them to stir out of the tent, the whole should be put to death. A necessary tent was pitched within the limits of the sentries; but they were not

allowed to go to it, without being attended by a serjeant and file of men. The officers on guard were ordered to see, and count them, every half hour during the night; and, I am sorry to learn, that some of the officers disgraced themselves, by adding to the severity of this order, in *unnecessarily awakening* the princes at each visit. I could not have believed these facts, had they not been related by officers who actually mounted the guard over the princes, more than once, during the march to Madras.

You may readily conceive the state of the princes' minds, during this confinement and degradation; so different from any thing they had hitherto met with, or even heard of, at the hands of the British. Ever since the loss of their father, they had been taught to look up to the British government for paternal protection and indulgence; and, conscious of never having forfeited it, and of their own good conduct on a late occasion, (which was, indeed, so manifest, in resisting every overture from the mutineers), they could not but more sensibly feel the hardship of their fate, in finding protection and indulgence converted into the most degrading, insulting, and wanton harshness, that could have been shewn to the greatest culprits. Torn from the bosoms of their families, and placed, along with their menial servants, in the strictest confinement; obliged to sleep, eat, and perform every office of nature, under the eyes of European soldiers, (whose touch they are taught by their religion to abhor, as that of hog's flesh); their every gesture, and look,

watched with suspicion ; undisturbed repose even denied them ; what must have been their sentiments of the much boasted indulgence, humanity, and beneficence of the British character ? And, what wonder they should exclaim, “ Surely, this is not the nation, which, after conquering Mysoor, behaved with so much lenity, munificence, and affection, towards the family of its fallen monarch ? ”

But it was still necessary to keep up the farce, of making it generally believed, that the Mysoor family were the sole instigators of the late atrocities ; although, out of many hundred Sepoys, examined as witnesses, and promised pardon on condition of accusing them, and many hundred pagodas expended amongst the inhabitants of Vellore, to come forwards with evidence against them, yet nothing had been substantiated, or even asserted against the majority of them ; and the crime of Moiz Udeen was that of encouraging the mutineers *to keep* the fort, after it was in their possession, rather than of having instigated them *to seize it*. Hence (in the necessity of keeping up the farce) this severity towards the princes ; for when once the pleasure of a great man is known, it is easy to find inferior and subordinate agents ready to adopt and administer to it.

The Mysoor princes were embarked, as you will have seen in the newspapers, on board his Majesty's ship the *Culloden* ; and Colonel Marriott, having delivered them over to the supreme government in Bengal, returned by Dawk, and is now on his march to Cal-

cutta; with a strong escort, in charge of their families, and the two youngest sons of Tippo, who were not taken round by sea, out of humanity to their mothers. It might probably have been good policy in our government, to have carried the whole family round to Bengal, immediately after the conquest of Mysoor; and I have heard, that this measure was taken into the serious consideration of Lord Wellesley: but his great dislike to undertake any measure having the least appearance of unnecessary harshness or inhumanity, and his wish to hold up the conduct of the British government in the most liberal and favourable point of view to the native powers of India, led him to sacrifice a policy which he deemed more severe than urgent. But to return—

We had no sooner got rid of the Mysoor princes, stigmatized as the instigators of plots, then daily reports were brought from every station of the army, of a general spirit of disaffection, and, in some places, of open mutiny; and no measure seemed to be adopted at head-quarters, but that of marching the mutinous corps up and down the country, as though the object had been to disseminate, rather than suppress, the disaffection. The mutineers, taken with arms in their hands at Vellore, were yet unpunished; and many corps appeared to wait the event, and see, whether the commander in chief durst carry the sentences of death into execution or not. The massacre at Vellore had naturally created a great degree of distrust between the European officers and their Sepoys throughout the army; and the indecision of measures at head-quarters, seemed further to

strengthen this distrust. If an officer took *no* precautionary measures, on receiving information of an intended plot, he was liable to the severest censure; as well as responsible for his own and the lives of his European officers. On the contrary, if he took precautionary measures, he was accused of creating unnecessary distrust; and equally censured for being premature, and not allowing the mutiny to go on till satisfactorily proved; when it would have been too late to prevent it.

You will scarcely believe, that the conduct of the commandants of Bangalore and Trichinopoly (both King's officers) was highly approved, for timely suppressing expected or pretended mutinies; whilst similar conduct in the commandants of Palamcotta and Travancore (Company's officers,) subjected them to be brought to a general court-martial, on the most disgraceful charges. The only difference in the two cases was, that where the two latter officers had openly disarmed the mutineers after proof, the commandant of Trichinopoly had *privately stolen* the ammunition from them, after he had failed in his attempt to disarm a regiment of native cavalry, which, as well as the native infantry, had never manifested the least symptom of disaffection; although no conduct could tend more essentially to cause distrust, than such an attempt to disarm them.

The court-martial, however, (composed of officers of the highest rank in the King's and Company's army,) acquitted the commandant of Travancore "*honourably*"; and the commandant of Palamcotta "*most honourably*." And here let me pay another tribute to the general li-

berality of sentiment, in the King's and Company's officers. A court-martial, in India, is composed of officers from both services ; with a small majority from the service of the person to be tried. This majority is established by the articles of war ; but the confidence in the honour of each other, that no party prejudices shall prevail, is such, that I have frequently known an officer of one service, who had rather have the majority on his trial from the *opposite* service. This will tend to prove my assertion, that jealousy is not encouraged by individuals of either service ; but by those who wish to make tools of both, to serve their own prejudices and private ends.

Under the late alarming and unexpected circumstances, when our existence in India was at stake, you would have supposed, that every member in the council of government, would have been animated by sentiments of unanimity. But unfortunately, parties appeared to be more divided, if possible, in sentiment, than ever ; and instead of uniting to quell or disperse the tempest that was raging, they commenced mutual recriminations on each other, as to the origin of it. The whole subject being so intimately connected with military arrangement, the governor, as well as the civil counsellors, seem to have given as much way to the opinions of the commander in chief, as they could, consistently with their duty ; and he appeared, for some time, to enjoy a triumph, and to carry every thing in his own way.

To add, however, to the difficulties under which the executive government laboured, the supreme court of

justice, interfered with the temporary system of police, established, for the security of peace, in the immediate vicinity of Madras; where the native inhabitants seemed to encourage the military to throw off their allegiance.

The breach between the government and the court was soon widened; and speeches were delivered from the bench, in addresses to the grand jury, which, it is said, tended to lessen the authority of government in the eyes of the natives, at a time when every nerve ought to have been strained to support it. I am not qualified to say which side was right, or which wrong, in these disputes; and it is of the less consequence, as the whole of the papers have, I believe, been transmitted home, to be laid before his Majesty in council, for ultimate decision; you will therefore hear it many months before we shall.

I will now proceed to state other circumstances, not entirely of a military nature, that may have had great influence in exciting the late disturbances.

You will first naturally ask, how the minds of our native army, could so easily, and, to all appearance, so suddenly, have been alienated from our interests; after manifesting the strongest instances of affection and attachment, perhaps ever shewn by any army, and under the most trying and difficult circumstances; in-somuch that their fidelity had become proverbial? I allude to the times of Hyder Aly Khan, and the first days of Tippo Sultan, when scarcely a spot of ground, or dominion, was left us, without the walls of Madras:

and when, it is well known, that immense bribes were offered to our Sepoys to desert to the enemy.

The last twenty-five years have altered the whole face of affairs in India; and, from being in a state, thankfully to *receive* even tolerable terms of peace at the hands of the Mysoor sovereigns in 1782, we now find ourselves in a capacity to *dictate* the terms of peace to every native prince in India:—The government of Mysoor, blotted out of the number of independent powers; that of Hyderabad, and of Poonah, solely supported by the assistance of a British subsidiary force; and the governments of Nagpoor, Ujein, and Indoor, circumscribed and limited at our pleasure. The consequence has been, that we have changed the good-will of three-fourths of these (who *then* looked upon us as a natural, necessary, and well-balanced check, against the overbearing power of Mysoor), into deadly enmity or malicious envy. But this is not all:—for our rise upon their fallen power, has not only injured their political interests as nations, but has also affected them as individuals, by the reduction it has caused in their civil, revenue, and military departments; whereby, not only their troops have been disbanded, but their sirdars, and men of family, have been distressed and thrown out of employ.

I think the following may, in round numbers, be considered as the military forces formerly and at present supported by these governments, independent of irregular troops employed in the collection of revenues:

	In 1799.	In 1807.
	Men.	
Mysoor	100,000	16,000
Hyderabad	70,000	24,000
Poonah, and dependant Jaghirdars	90,000	36,000
Berar Rajah, (Nagpoor)	100,000	40,000
Scindiah, (Ujein)	150,000	80,000
Holkar, (Indoor)	60,000	34,000
	<hr/> 570,000	<hr/> 230,000
Shewing a reduction, in round numbers, of.....		340,000

Besides the hordes of petty Jaghirdars, whose immediate dependants consisted of from 50 to 200 men each, I have not included the numerous body of Polygar troops, who have been disarmed, not only in our own territories, but in those of Mysoor, and every country where our influence extended. I have no doubt, but these would make up the above estimate, of troops reduced since 1800, to 500,000. The surplus population, which had usually found employment in filling up the casualties of these 500,000 men, should also be taken into the account for some years back.

I grant, that many of these men have fallen in action; but, where are the rest, and how are they gaining their livelihood?—I have no hesitation in asserting, that thousands and ten thousands of them are wandering up and down the country, without any ostensible occupation, or any mode of gaining an honest livelihood; consequently, ready to undertake any thing. Few soldiers, but especially Mussulmans, can be made to

work, or to pursue agricultural labours; and fewer are brought up to trade, or mechanical occupations. If such, therefore, is the distress of the discharged common soldier, what must be that of the sirdars, and officers of rank, who have been turned adrift without the smallest provision?

On the capture of Mysoor, the earliest attention of the British government was turned to this point; and handsome provision was made for many (but still a small proportion) of the officers of the late Mysoor government. The rest, unable to remain in the country without a pension or employment, were obliged to seek their bread in the service of other native governments. Some perished in the armies of Dhoondia; and many got employment at Nagpoor, Poonah, Ujein, &c. The conquests of the British arms, however, pursued them thither; and, when we obliged those Mahratta states to disband the greatest part of their forces, these unfortunate wanderers, with many others, were forced to return south, and disperse themselves as they could, in search of food; whether in the dominions of the British, or of their allies. What, *now*, must be the sentiments of these persons; and on whom must they vent all their indignation and enmity, but upon the British? Under our government, there is not an employment to be held by a respectable Mahamudan, that could support his family in comfort. If a *military* line is pointed out to him, he must enter as a private, and serve, progressively, through every rank, until he gets a commission; which would then, after

12 or 15 years, barely afford subsistence to himself, and not furnish clothes, or food, to a large family. There is no other line, but that of the *revenue*; and here, could he attain the highest situation, an Amuldarie of a district, worth, perhaps, £120 a-year, the place, in the first instance, is but temporary, and at the will of the collector, and there are so many circumstances against him, that not one in an hundred could probably hold it above a year. The Mahamudans are neither accomptants nor men of business; and the art of revenue is wrapped up in such arcana of intrigue, that none but a wily Brahmin is able to unravel it: and all the activity and interest of this class of people, would be set at work, to turn the Mahamudan out of a line, which is held, in entire monopoly, by the Brahmins. Tippo himself, with all his admirable regulations, was not able to employ Mahamudans in the collection of his revenues, against the influence of the Brahmins; as he found, after several attempts, which cost him many lacs of rupees, in deficits.

Hence, therefore, you may say, every door is shut against the old and respectable Mahamudan families, from gaining a livelihood under the British government.

When you look back, and perceive that, in the short space of eight years, our conquests have totally ruined many thousands of these, who may be stiled the old nobility and barons of the country (from most of them furnishing their quota of troops to the head

of the government, under the old Mahamudan and feudal regime) :—when you see these poor creatures, first selling off their household furniture and goods, then their wives' and children's ornaments; and, lastly, their books, valuable for the length of time they have been in their families :—I say, when you see them reduced to this distress, and not knowing where they are to get food for the next day ;—can you, for a moment, expect them to pray for a continuation of prosperity to the government which has reduced them to this difficulty? or, rather, are you not to expect, that the whole of their remaining strength will be exerted to overthrow it, and to establish another, where their former rank and consequence will be respected; and, under which, they can live with character and dignity, if not with affluence?

Do not, I beseech you, think I am drawing a picture of fictitious distress. I can refer you to any officer of experience, now at home, for the truth of it; and I have, alas! too frequently, been an unwilling witness of it myself, when I had not the power of administering, more than feebly, to its relief. I have seen an old man, whose father and relations had commanded in the Mahamudan armies which conquered the southern parts of Dukin, bringing me a valuable book, for sale, to get bread for his family; and, with tears in his eyes, begging I would take his seal (name) out of it, that it might not be known whence I had it! But why should I refer you to further proofs than the whole libraries of valuable Persian manuscripts, yearly

sent to Europe, when it is so well known, that nothing but the most urgent distress will oblige any respectable family to part with their books? They are so particular in even lending them, that I myself have paid, at Hyderabad, 300 rupees, for permission to copy a manuscript.

The old saying, that "Pride and poverty go hand-in-hand," was never more fully demonstrated, than in passing through the streets of any old city or town occupied by these decaying families; where you will know their descendants, as easily, by their rags of fine linen, as by the fairness of their skins; the latter occasioned by their being too proud to intermarry with the more southern race of Mahamudans.

Previously to the year 1799, any persons, disaffected towards our government, or injured by the Nabob of the Carnatic, had nothing more to do than to pass the Ghauts into Tippo's country, where they were sure of promotion and employment. The case is now widely different; and the Mussulman has no point left, to which he can turn with a prospect of bettering his condition: he must, therefore, wait where he is, in the hopes of some change of system.

The management of the Carnatic, having been taken from the Nabob into the Company's own hands, served to distress many of these families, although the generality of the inhabitants, and particularly the cultivators, were relieved and benefited by the measure.

The establishment also of a Brahminical, upon the ruins of the Mahamudan, government in Mysoor, &c.

though a measure of the first importance and necessity to the British interests, tended, as shewn above, to ruin many thousands of families. Tippu Sultan had encouraged, as much as possible, the Mussulmans of the neighbouring states, to look up to himself as the head and promoter of their faith, with a view to entice them to settle in his dominions. After the conquest, the Brahminie minister, Poorniah, jealous, and probably afraid, of their power, in the infancy of his administration, was very backward in employing them; and, by the strictness of the police he established, he contrived to disgust and drive them out of the country, where, indeed, it was difficult for them now to remain, with the prospect of providing for their families. About the same period also, the whole of the states, formerly possessed by the independent Pathan Jaghirdars, of Kudpah, Kurnool, &c. passed into the hands of the British government; by which the chiefs alone, of the Jagheers, were pensioned, leaving most of the dependant branches and respectable families without provision. You must not think I wish to arraign the justice or liberality of the British government, in not providing for these families. The native pension-list of the Company, exceeds that, probably, of any nation in the world; and no conquest has been made, or territory received, in cession from a native power, without a very large proportion being settled, from its revenues, as pensions to individuals. This, however, does not at all lessen the miseries of thousands of individuals, whose hardships I have mentioned above: all

cannot be provided for, without rendering the country unprofitable to the possessors.

Time is apparently the only remedy; until new sources of employment are opened by the British government, or the habits of the Mahamudans allow them to accept of such as now offer. The new courts of justice may open a path towards a comfortable livelihood, (as native Commissioners, &c.); but it should be inculcated, as a principal part of the duty of all collectors and Europeans in employment, to shew peculiar delicacy and attention to this respectable, but indigent, class of inhabitants. No persons in the world are so much gratified, by trifling attentions and indulgencies, as these Mahamudans of family; and to receive politely, and offer a chair to, one of them, will win his good-will and heartfelt gratitude, sooner than any pecuniary favour you can bestow on him.

The influence of the Mahamudan religion, over the whole of its votaries, is, in no case, less than that of the Roman Catholic; though, in many cases, much greater. The inveteracy against Christians, instilled into them by the founder of their religion, (after an ineffectual attempt to convert them to his doctrines), strengthened subsequently by the obstinate and persevering attacks of our crusaders, has, of late years, *i. e.* within a few centuries, been revived, against Europeans in India, with redoubled fury. This will easily be seen, by a perusal of the Portuguese accounts of their first settlement in India, and in that of every

other subsequent contest, wherein we have continually been opposed by Mahamudans.

The great cruelty of Tippo Sultan even, was urged more by his fanaticism, than by his policy; and all his negotiations with the other independent native powers, shewed that he expected to hurt us more by exciting *prejudice* against us, than the swords of our enemies. I refer you to the state papers, and even the records of his "*Dreams*," published on the capture of Seringapatam, for a further elucidation of his sentiments. What he could not, however, effect with all his influence and money, *whilst we were no object of fear or jealousy to the neighbouring states*, has, I fear, easily been accomplished, by the indigent, but numerous persons I have above described, as *ruined by our prosperity*.

The weight of the Mahamudan influence is not, however, confined to persons of their own religion, but extends very widely amongst the Hindoos; who, in the Dukin, and southern countries, have so long looked up to them as masters. The brilliancy of their early conquests did not serve to gain respect towards their persons and opinions, more than, or perhaps so much as, their adoption of the Indian custom of adherence to cast. They plundered and defiled the Hindoo pagodas, and killed their sacred cow for food; but, at the same time, they strictly adhered to their own tenets, in worshipping God, revering his prophets, and in not eating the hog, or any unclean animal; and, what was of more consequence in the prejudiced eyes of the Hindoos, they would not allow a Pariah, or Hindoo

man, of inferior cast, to touch their victuals, or to bring them water. Thus they made themselves respected, by respecting themselves. How widely different from the conduct of the first European settlers! who, not contented with plundering and defiling the pagodas and places of worship, or with converting the Hindoos by force, with fire and faggot, even daily violated every principle of that holy religion they were wishing to convert the natives to, by committing all and every the most beastly and uncleanly sins; thus, rendering themselves hated, despised, and degraded, below the *lowest* class of Hindoo cast. What ages of virtue and clemency would it require, to wash out so foul and deep a stain! Of all the European nations, since settled in India, the English appeared the most likely to obliterate this deep rooted prejudice against the European character. Having no superstitious ceremonies of worship, or idols, like the Catholics, to offend the followers of Mahamud, and no system of bigotry, or inquisition, to force converts to their religion, whereby they might offend the tolerating principles of the Hindoo, the English had little to do, but respect the tenets of their own religion, and pay strict attention to cleanliness, in not assimilating with *any*, and especially *lower*, classes of Indians; nor in allowing their victuals to be dressed, or themselves to be personally attended, by the most degraded orders of the natives. You would suppose that cleanliness alone would have been a sufficient inducement, with Englishmen, to be most particular in their choice of servants,

to attend them, and to prepare their food. But, when it is considered, that we now frequently eat victuals prepared by the hands of people despised and degraded below every other class, and know, that respect amongst the natives is only to be gained by the strict observance of the ceremonies of outward cleanliness, how can we expect to gain it, whilst our middle and upper servants, even, (Hindoos or Mahamudans), would lose their cast, and be degraded, by eating of the victuals prepared for their European masters?

It would be ridiculous to deny ourselves such food as is destined by Providence for our subsistence, merely because it would give offence to the natives. We might thus be deprived of almost all kinds of food (except vegetables), by the prejudices of one sect or another; but this they themselves do not expect or require of us. It is enough, to declare, that our divine laws allow such and such food; and so long as we follow those laws strictly, the natives will *admire*, rather than despise us: for no people revere strictness of principle more than the natives of India. It is the want of *all* principle, for which they despise us; and the daily experience, that we do not respect ourselves, which makes them disrespect us. The well-informed Brahmin and Hindoo, will perhaps pity the Mussulman, for not having received his law, to revere the cow, and idolatrous images, instead of killing the former, and breaking the latter; but he will never deign to endeavour to convert him. He extends the same reasoning to the European. The bigoted Mussulman, however, (a foreigner as well

as ourselves), is not so liberal in his sentiments; for, having been brought up, from infancy, in hatred to Christianity, and especially jealous of the European, who has raised the foundation of his dominion in India upon the ruins of Mahamudan power, he loses no opportunity of vilifying and defaming his character to the Hindoo, by representing the European as an "eater of hogs," and, "drinker of wine;" not as the killer of the cow, which you would suppose ought to catch the ear of an Hindoo, and make a deeper impression on him. This will account for a curious circumstance that I am tempted now to relate:—During a residence of nearly half my life in India, I never once heard a Hindoo urge against a European, as abuse, that he was a "*killer of cows*," although, it is a general term of even Hindoo reproach, to blast him, as an "*eater of hog's flesh*;" which proves how far the Hindoos have taken up their ideas of us, from the Mahamudans, who look upon Christians as a sect of Jews, and deny that the New Testament has abrogated the strictness of the old Levitical law. But of this hereafter;—I only wish to prove the weight of Mahamudan opinion and influence, over the minds of the other classes of Indians.

You are already aware, that the greatest strength of our battalions consists in *Mussulmanie* soldiers; and that, from their being generally the smartest men in corps, they arrive, in a greater proportion, to be non-commissioned and commissioned officers, than those of other casts. Hence, their rank and station must infallibly give additional influence to their opi-

nions; and that these officers should not receive much bias from the sufferings of their poor relations, and distressed chiefs of their own religion, who are not employed under government, but starving, as I have stated above, through our prosperity, is contrary to all experience, and to our knowledge of human nature. Many of the sons and relatives of the distressed Mysoor, and other families also, have been obliged to enlist as privates, in our Sepoy corps, and cannot see the beggary and poverty of their parents and sisters without regret.

But I need not confine myself to the effects which our rapid prosperity, and its consequent prejudices, have produced upon the lower orders in India; when, I fear, so much infatuation can be proved against the *higher* orders. Will you believe, that two Mahamudan princes, who have first been elevated, against a strong opposition, to their respective Musnuds, and who now only exist in power, by the support of our arms, should have been deeply suspected, and one of them actually convicted, of encouraging the late disaffection in our native army? This looks like something more than infatuation; it approaches insanity: but it is a true and correct trait in the character of an eastern, and especially of a Mahamudan, prince.

Lust of dominion, and jealousy of power, were the rocks upon which Tippo Sultan, and a thousand others before him, have split. But it may be asked, why the Subahdar of the Dukin, and the Nabob of the Carnatic, had, in former days, so strenuously rejected the prof-

ferred assistance of Hyder Aly Khan and of Tippu Sultan, to deliver them from our too great influence? The answer is most evident:—had they *at that time* driven the English out of the country, they foresaw they must be left at the mercy of the more despotic and intolerable sway of Mysoor; for *prejudice* led them to hate and fear, whilst they pretended to despise, the usurpers of that government, as low and base-born: but now that Mysoor is no longer in existence as an independent power, they had every hope and expectation, each of raising his individual state to a total independence, should they succeed in subverting the dominion and influence of the English, when so fair an opportunity, as the mutiny of their army offered itself to them. Hence were those weak politicians ready to enter into any, the most desperate scheme, which promised them uncontrouled power.

Whoever has for a moment tasted, or even approached near to, the luscious enjoyments of eastern despotism; and has breathed the maddening influenza of adulation, in the Durbar; or inhaled the sweeter, but no less fascinating and delicious, though effeminating delirium of the unlimited Zunana, may be compared to the royal tiger, which has once tasted human blood. Neither will, *alive*, relinquish his post; but will desperately advance into the deepest labyrinths of danger, to possess and secure what they have once tasted: for life, without such enjoyments, is of no longer value. The despot can bear no controul; and to thwart, is only to irritate him. To expect, therefore,

that the dictates of gratitude towards his patron, or those of reason and prudence towards his own interests, should be a sufficient chain to the intemperance of wild ambition and lust in the Mahamudan fatalist, is to look for what has never once been found in the page of ancient or modern eastern history.

But our wonder at the conduct of these two princes, ought to cease, when we consider, that they were underhandedly instigated and encouraged, to play the game of the very persons, who had previously opposed their ascension to the Musnud ; and who now expected to use them merely as tools to their own elevation. Hence, therefore, a general coalition of the various, and hitherto opposite interests, in the Carnatic, as well as at Hyderabad.

I now leave you to judge, whether I am right or wrong, in venturing to suggest our late rapid prosperity in this part of India, as not entirely unconnected with the general disaffection, just manifested on the coast of Corromandel. If I am right, much blame will attach to those who urged the recall of the Marquis Wellesley, at a period when his services were so much required, before he could put the finishing hand to his important and brilliant administration ; and also to those, who could suppose, that the interior regulation and consolidation of an immense empire, did not require as much energy and ability, as the rapid conquest of it.

Has the solidity of Buonaparte's power been founded by over-running the continent of Europe ; or by the

interior civil and political arrangements, he subsequently formed throughout it?—No; you obliged Buonaparte most essentially, when you hastily recalled Marquis Wellesley!

Amongst the many causes given to account for the late general disaffection on the coast of Corromandel, you will assuredly have heard, that a general belief existed amongst the natives, that it was the intention of the British Government, to *force* every class of them to become Christians; and that we were to commence this system of conversion upon the Sepoys. There can be no doubt, but that every engine of our concealed and avowed enemies, has been set at work, to excite against us a general disgust, throughout India; and this rumour is a strong instance of the great ingenuity as well as energy which they have exerted, to create enmity to us, in the hearts of our own subjects.

Many persons, unacquainted with the *strength* of Indian prejudice, would have laughed at the very idea of instilling such a belief into the minds of the natives: for, until very lately, the major part of the Indians looked upon the English as a kind of deistical sect, who, little regarding even the outward appearance of religion themselves, gave their heads no trouble about that of their neighbours.

This conduct, so widely different from that of the Portuguese, French, and other Catholics, whilst in power, had, in a great measure, secured the good will and affection of the natives towards us; and our popularity

was greatly owing to our principles of toleration on all religious subjects.

They saw us protecting, with equal care, the religious and civil establishments of the Mahamudan and of the Hindoo; and what confirmed them in their idea of our principles of toleration was, observing that, even after we were sole masters and sovereigns of the southern peninsula, we not only allowed the French and other Roman Catholic missionaries to preach to, and superintend their native flocks, as formerly, but even encouraged them to do the same, throughout the countries, as they were progressively conquered by us: whilst the Protestant missionaries and English clergy, were confined to the few converts they might already have made, in the proximity of Madras, Cuddalore, and the maritime districts.

Perhaps the weakest side of the English character, is that of being a dupe to the plausibility of foreigners; and of allowing the greatest indulgencies to them, on points, where native Englishmen are tied down by the strictest prohibitions. This may be daily witnessed in India; but in nothing more evidently, than in the object before us. Whilst the English Government would not be at the trouble to fit up a chapel at Seringapatam, or any of the great stations of the army, for the accommodation and edification of whole regiments of Protestant soldiers; they, without hesitation, grant licenses to French missionaries, to go about, unmoled, and gain what local and political information they might require, throughout the whole of Mysoor

and other territories, under the pretence of disseminating the principles of Christianity.

The respect in which these *Padres* are held, is not merely occasioned by reverence for their spiritual character, but by the plenitude of their real temporal power. Many of these missionaries have from 30,000 to 70,000 souls, over whom they exercise the most arbitrary and despotic sway ; and on whom they levy sums of money, at their pleasure, under pretence of dispensations, erection of new churches, repairs of old ones, and, if I am not misinformed, of donations to the Chair of St. Peter : besides the immense sums, monthly acquired by these blood-suckers, under the head of fines, for crim. con., immoral conduct, divorce, debauch, &c. &c. together with the regularly established fees, for marriages, christenings, burials, administration of sacraments, and other religious, mixed with idolatrous, ceremonies. Add to this, no native Christian dares to take a civil suit against another Christian, into any of the established courts of the district ; but must first bring it before the Padre, who generally decides in favour of the highest briber : and should the sufferer venture to appeal, or lay his case before the civil courts, he risks not only immediate excommunication from the parish, but subjects himself to be fined, for disrespect, at the sole discretion of the priest. Some late instances, of these arbitrary fines, having been levied on natives *by torture*, will, I trust, have opened the eyes of the English magistrates, and induced them to lay the subject before Government.

We perceive, by the newspapers, that you have just had the fullest discussions, in England, on a late Catholic question; and after having heard the best arguments on both sides of the house, you will readily excuse my enlarging upon the subject. I must, however, state my fullest conviction, that whether in Europe or India, until the fundamental principles of the Roman Catholic religion are changed, we must always look towards the *power* rather than the *inclination* of its followers to injure us. The power may at present be represented as feeble; but in these times, when no event, however extraordinary, can create more than a moment's wonder, we should always be guarding ourselves against the possibility of its being greater, instead of assisting to raise it.

Having stated the temporal, as well as the spiritual, ascendancy of the priests, over their followers in India. I shall proceed to assure you, that I speak far within limits, when I calculate the number of native Catholics, on the coast, and in the countries dependant upon Fort St. George, at 350,000 or 400,000 souls; including the southern Polygars (almost all of whom are of this persuasion), but exclusive of Bednore, Malabar, and the countries formerly converted by the bishop and priests of Goa.

You will not be so much surprized at this number, as you will, when I tell you, that the pastoral teachers of these people, are all French, born and educated priests; who can have as much communication as they please, with the head of the French government.

through the medium of the Jesuits' college, at Pondicherry, and similar establishments of spies at Tranquebar, &c. whence neutral ships are daily sailing, either direct to the Isle of France, to America, or to Europe.

Under whatever *present* circumstances, of aristocrat or democrat he may be, I look upon it as much a matter of certainty, that a Frenchman, in his hereditary hatred to England, will be a Frenchman still; as that a Roman Catholic will, without remorse, be the enemy of a Protestant heretic, whenever an opportunity occurs to shew it. Both have received blows from us, which they can neither forget or forgive; and thousands of instances might daily be brought, to prove, that, in neither case, is gratitude for former kindnesses to be relied upon. How many, protected by us in the former periods of the French Revolution, are now our most bitter and inveterate enemies; acting as though they could not even forgive our kindnesses towards them? On the small scale of experience in India, how many proofs might I bring you, of men, who, for years, having been supported by our bounty, were the first to betray us!

But allowing that we could depend upon the attachment of these French priests to our interests, is it, I would demand, a measure of policy, to *encourage* the propagation and establishment of a sect, in India, which we have so much regret to find already established in our sister island? The Catholics of India are equally ignorant and superstitious as the lower classes in Ire-

land; and consequently, as easily to be led, by the craftiness of their priests, into any diabolical plot.

The temporal interests of these Catholic priests have induced them already to set their followers against the English, by representing all Protestants, as heretics, and persons to be despised; and I am sorry to have reason to believe, that this system of bringing *temporal* to the aid of *spiritual* arguments, has been encouraged by, if it did not originate with, a Protestant missionary; who, no doubt, thought he was acting most conscientiously on the occasion. I allude to the circumstance of the late Rev. Mr. Gericke, who, in a tour of a short month's absence from Madras, *boasted* of having made fourteen thousand converts to the Protestant faith. When I asked a French Catholic missionary, whether such a thing was possible or not, he assured me it was true; and added, with great bitterness, that they were not converted from the Hindoo, but *Catholic* persuasion, by the arguments of Mr. Gericke; and farther, that the English Government, being now sole masters of the country, were about to tolerate no Christian sect but that of the Protestants.

The natural hatred of the French or Catholic missionaries, towards the English or Protestants (for they appear now to have divided their sects into French and English Christians), having been thus inflamed by the jarring of temporal interests, it is no wonder the priests should have endeavoured (if only to preserve their own authority) to sow as much disaffection towards the English as possible:—but there are, moreover, very

strong reasons to believe, that they have been instigated, and encouraged to do so, by the French agents at Pondicherry, Tranquebar, &c.

We have seen the success of the French government, in conducting intrigues, in Europe, that required much more finesse and political sagacity; and it has long been avowed, that they would leave no stone unturned, to make the natives of India revolt against our government, if they should fail to make the army mutiny. Now they could not desire a fairer opportunity of doing this, than the one granted them by ourselves, in admitting the free ingress and egress of their priests, whilst an *English* general, field, or other officer, cannot travel from one military station to another, without a regular passport; and we may depend upon it, that Buonaparte has not again raised up the papal power, without the intention of converting it to his own benefit and political ends:—it was, in old times, too useful and powerful an engine in the hands of despotism, to be neglected in our present, unhappily, too similar, days.

But, if my information is correct, government is in possession of sufficient and direct proof of the agency of these priests. An officer of engineers, on the Mysoor survey, abruptly entered the dwelling of one of the *most favoured* of these priests, during his absence. This man, from the remoteness of his situation, thought himself in no danger of such an intrusion, and had not locked up, with his usual caution, his papers and correspondence; amongst which, the first thing that

struck the officer's eye, was a long letter addressed to Buonaparte, by the priest, giving him information on a variety of subjects. What steps have been taken to secure the person and papers of this offender, I do not know.

Information of much importance has lately also been communicated to government, respecting transactions at Pondicherry, by Colonel Gillespie; the gallant officer who gave the first check to the mutinies going on in the Carnatic, and thereby saved the country. But another French priest has actually been taken prisoner, in the act of stirring up the Sepoys to mutiny, in one of our largest cantonments (Wallajahbad), after an endeavour to seduce a regiment of native cavalry at a neighbouring station.

Such conduct, you would suppose, ought to open our eyes against the admission of any priests, into our Indian possessions.

As the conversion of the great body of the natives of India, to the Christian faith, appears, of late, to have become a favourite idea, with some most intelligent, philanthropic, and worthy men, in Europe, it may not be displeasing to you to learn our ideas, of such a measure, in India. I say, *our* ideas, because I have never met with a person who has been any time in India, and has been conversant with the manners, customs, habits, and religious prejudices of the natives, who differed with me in opinion on this subject: although I have found some few that did, who took up their ideas from a residence about Madras and its neighbourhood, and had no op-

portunity of seeing natives in their *real* character; and who were generally led away with warm enthusiastic, prejudices towards *one religion*, and therefore, however holy, virtuous, and good, they might be themselves, they were little qualified to think, or to talk on the subject of *religion in general*, as regarding the different and various systems established throughout this vast universe. Could there be any hope, that a *progressive* system of Christianity could be universally introduced into India, in the course of as many ages even, as it has taken to establish, root, and consolidate that of Brahma, in the hearts and *very nature* of the Indians, there is no good Christian, and surely no Englishman, that would not exult in the prospect of such a blessing being conferred upon the posterity of millions of fellow creatures by his means and endeavours. But to take the hasty steps which are now recommended, of sending out pastors and preachers, to instruct them in Christianity, is commencing our work at the wrong end.

It is first necessary to *undo*, what has already *been done*; and to cause the religion, you wish to introduce, to be respected, and received as a blessing, where it is now despised, abhorred, and would be received as the greatest degradation and misfortune, by the great body of our native subjects.

Every person who knows the benign influence of the Christian (Protestant) religion, and its beneficial effects on the morals of society, would, as I have said above, undoubtedly wish to see it propagated, *in its utmost purity*, throughout the east; but is there any one,

so bigotted, as to tell me, he would wish to encourage the growth of what, at present, *is called* Christianity, amongst the natives of India?

I say we are beginning at the wrong end of our work, because we are endeavouring to plant, in ground that has not been prepared and manured. The best preparation, I have no hesitation in asserting, for the full growth and reception of the principles of Christianity, will be found, in encouraging, nay forcing, as far as possible, the natives of each class, to exercise their respective religions to their utmost moral capacity. The moral precepts and pure doctrines of the Mussulmans, no less than the Hindoos, have been looked on, by the most learned Europeans, as little inferior to those of the Christian religion. If, therefore, you can once inculcate, or enforce, the morality of each cast, to its utmost perfection, the transition to Christianity, *in its utmost purity*, will be very short and easy.

At present you have *two* violent prejudices, or natural propensities, to surmount:—that of changing the long established religion of the Hindoos *at all*; and secondly, that of changing a life of vice and sensuality, into one of virtue and moderation.

Christianity is, at present, degraded in the eyes of the natives, by the conduct and morals of the converts. Can you expect an outcast Mussulman, an outcast Hindoo, or an outcast Pariah, to become a good and respectable Christian, by the mere talismanic preparatory operation of baptism? The supposition is absurd, and a priest who baptizes a native before he has

been thoroughly instructed in the principal tenets and moral obligations of Christianity ; nay, indeed, until he has shewn, by his conduct, some promise of fulfilling them :—I say, such a priest deserves the severest reprehension, if not punishment, rather than promotion and a passport to heaven. Such conduct can only tend further to *disgrace* the Christian religion ; and he ought to be most scrupulous in admitting converts. The priest ought rather to forbid, than invite such characters into the pale of the church : for he must be a very good Hindoo, of the present day, before he would be a tolerable, or even bad, Christian. What can, therefore, be expected, from converts of the very meanest and vilest wretches, who have become *degraded and outcast Hindoos*, before they would *condescend*, as a last resource, to become *Christians* ? If it were possible to change their skins from black to white, then might you have some chance of its being possible to make *good Christians* out of the dregs and outcasts of the Hindoo sect ; whom, nothing but *necessity* will, even now, force to become converts, from the disgrace which the *name* of “ Christian ” carries along with it.

Bad, however, as the Hindoo of the present day is, when compared with former times of more purity, to be gathered from history, how much better is he than the eastern Christian, in whose bosom you will find the whole of the European vices, engrafted upon the rich and fruitful tree of eastern libertinism ? In him we see all the barriers of cast (formed by habitual temperance and abstinence) broken down ; and in their stead, a

whole catalogue of crimes, arising from drunkenness and every species of European debauchery.

I know it is the practice of well-meaning people, at home, to sit in their closets, and read, with great joy and exultation, the accounts of hundreds of poor Indians being converted to Christianity; when, alas! a little month's experience in India, would shew them the dreadful state to which these poor wretches are reduced by the boon conferred, and quickly change their exultation for pity.

The practices of the priests, to induce them to become Christians, would exceed your belief, were I to relate them: and after all, they are only *half* Christians, being allowed to retain as many of their own idols, or saints, as they please; and nothing can be more ridiculous, or impious, than to see, in a solemn religious Catholic procession, the image of the Virgin Mary carrying the infant Jesus in her arms, supported on one side by the Hindoo God Vishnu, and on the other by Shiven, or some such eastern worthy. Instead of having the precepts of morality instilled into their minds, they are taught implicit obedience towards their priests, a blind belief in every kind of priestcraft, and the forgiveness of *any* crime, on paying the prescribed fee.

The Protestant religion, not allowing of these inoctreries, shows, and processions, to catch the eyes and imaginations of the ignorant, very few converts are made; and, when one solitary man has been admitted, (through some temporary necessity on his part), into

the pale of the church, if he had not previously lost his own cast, which is generally the case, he must for ever renounce all connexion with his family, and consent to be reckoned, by them, a vagabond and outcast, and reprobated with the vilest epithets. The only comfort he enjoys, to support him under this opprobrium, is, the permission he has thus purchased, to eat what he likes, and drink as much arrack as he pleases.

Such is the true picture of an eastern Christian convert; and he who, having witnessed it, could encourage the practice by his approbation, must for ever forfeit all pretensions to Christianity; and if any person who has been in India, whilst this precept was in his mind, "Do as thou wouldst be done by," could lay his hand upon his breast, and say, "Convert this innocent Hindoo to Christianity," I would brand him as a mad-man and a fanatic: I say, *innocent* Hindoo, because I extend this term to the great body of Hindoos, and do not confine my meaning to such of them as are a disgrace to *any* cast; and, therefore, commonly terminate their crimes, and frequently their lives, under the nominal character of Christians.

I should here have closed my remarks on this subject, had not the publications of the Rev. Dr. Buchanan, of Bengal, just been put into my hands.

This gentleman's statements are plausible, and highly creditable to him, as a man and as a Christian; but, I must remind you, that they are the statements of a person, who is confessedly exerting all his influence to be promoted to the *mitred* head of an ecclesiastical es-

tablishment in India. The letter, addressed to him, by the learned and most enlightened Dr. Watson, Bishop of Landaff, demands your most particular attention. It is dated the 14th of May, 1806; and I cannot, on this occasion, refrain from transcribing the following passage from it:

“God, in his providence,” says the Bishop, “hath so ordered things, that *America*, which, three hundred years ago, was peopled by none but Pagans, has now many millions of Christians in it; and will not, probably, three hundred years hence, have a single Pagan in it, but be occupied by more Christians, and more enlightened Christians, than now exist in Europe.”

“*Africa* is not, now, worse fitted for the reception of Christianity, than *America* was, when it was first visited by Europeans; and *Asia* is much better fitted for it, inasmuch as *Asia* enjoys a considerable degree of civilization, and some degree of it is necessary to the successful introduction of Christianity:—the commerce and colonization of Christian states have civilized *America*, and they will, in process of time, civilize and christianize the whole earth. Whether it be a Christian duty to attempt, by lenient methods, to propagate the Christian religion among Pagans and Mahometans, can be doubted, I think, by few; but, whether any attempt will be attended with much success, until Christianity is purified from its corruptions, and the lives of the Christians are rendered correspondent to their Christian profession, may be doubted by many: but there certainly never was a more promising oppor-

tunity of trying the experiment, of subverting Paganism in India, than that which has, for some years, been offered to the government of Great Britain."

The great weight and influence that must be attached to the above paragraphs, from the signature of one of the greatest friends to pure Christianity, will require that I should say a few words on the subject: That moral civilization, and even a very great degree of it, is necessary to the successful introduction of Christianity throughout the East, I have before endeavoured to prove, and have urged, that we should even lay the foundation of our attempts at conversion, in the high and sublime moral precepts of the Hindoo and Mahamudan religions; as a transition from these, in their purity, to Christianity, would be very short. But we must not deceive ourselves, by thinking, that had the Pagans and Mahamudans arrived at this state of purity, we should have as little trouble in converting them to Christianity, as we had with the American Pagans; because the latter, having *no* religious faith or prejudices of their own to be *first rooted out*, were ready to receive any system of religion, had it been ever so far inferior to that of Christianity.

The late dreadful proceedings in India, will serve to open the eyes of gentlemen in Europe; and to shew, to what lengths the natives may be urged, by the very apprehension of our attacking, or undermining, their religious prejudices. The abhorrence of all sects of Hindoos, to any change of their domestic or social customs and habits, much more of their religious sys-

tem, is most rooted; and can be equalled by nothing, but the same abhorrence, in the Mahamudans, to a change of their faith. What chance we have of overcoming the prejudices of either, must be determined by the experience of future ages: for the European nation, that attempts to do so *abruptly*, or *by force*, will only have occasion to repent it once, and that, after being driven out of India.

I most fully accord in the doubt that is expressed by the learned prelate, of our success in the conversion of Pagans, until the lives of Christians themselves are rendered correspondent to their Christian profession:—and how, I would beg leave to ask, are we to expect to make good Christians of many millions of native Indians, whilst all the clergymen you can send us out, are incapable of keeping the few Europeans within the just limits of their duty as Christians?

I am particularly happy to seize the weighty authority of this enlightened writer; as this is another point which I was about to urge, as a most necessary *prelude* to our attempts at conversion. For, can we expect the *name* of Christian to be redeemed from its present odium and disgrace, so long as the Europeans themselves hold out no example, by the regularity or sobriety of their lives, to the native converts that are made? A thief, a drunkard, a dog, and a Christian, are now, in India, synonymous terms!!!

But when I said, before, that we had commenced our attempts towards conversion at the wrong end, I held in reserve another position; to wit, that our only

probability of success depends upon the conversion of the *highest* orders and casts of the natives, before we commence our operations on the minds of the less enlightened.

There is, perhaps, no nation in the world, (not even China), that has arrived at so high a state of *civilization*, and is, at the same time, so little *enlightened*, as that of the Hindoos of Asia. Civilization is not all that is requisite, as a ground-work for the superstructure of Christianity; we must first enlighten the *minds* of the Hindoos, and make them perceive and understand the grossness of their present system of idolatry, before we can consider them as *prepared* to receive the pure precepts and doctrines of Christianity: and, to do this successfully, we must, assuredly, commence with the *upper*, and not with the lower, classes of our fellow subjects. But how far any attempts to enlighten them may be considered advisable, in a political view, I shall, hereafter, have an opportunity of enquiring.

I have already mentioned the reason, why the Mahamudan religion has obtained so much respect over that of the Christian; and this is further proved, by the great facility which it affords of making converts. I have no hesitation in asserting, that, for one Christian, there are thirty Mussulman, converts: and this is not extraordinary; for a man of the Pariah, and lowest cast of Hindoo, by becoming a Christian, *descends* even *lower* than he was before; whilst, on becoming a Mussulman, he *ascends* almost to the pre-

tensions of a gentleman : his mind is freed from idolatry ; he is taught to consider himself as one of the beings, who alone are protected by Providence ; and particularly to despise, not only the cast from which he was taken, but that even of the Brahmins, as idolaters. He is not, indeed, allowed to drink strong liquors, or to eat forbidden food : but, on the other hand, is promised Paradise, with all its luxuries, in the next world ; and his chance of preferment in this, along with all others of the faith, with whom, being of the same colour and complexion, he is instantly placed on an equal footing. In short, he obtains respect and character ; with every other temporal advantage over the Christian convert.

The sect of Mehanudans is, however, much increased, by a mode which cannot, on any large scale, be practised by Europeans ; this is, by taking every opportunity of purchasing, from distressed natives of other casts, children whom they educate, and bring up in their own families. You will seldom see any respectable Mussulman, of the middling class even, who has not from two to four of these, who are treated, in every way, as children, rather than slaves, in the family. Of such were the slaves of the Old Testament : far differing from those of the West Indies :—but, I am straying, and must return to the task I have undertaken.

If my conjectures on the more than suspicious conduct of the French missionaries be well founded, you may not perhaps hesitate to think, that another cause of

disaffection in our Indian settlements, may have originated in the apprehensions of the natives in general, that they were about to be converted to Christianity : for if these priests encouraged their *Catholic* followers to believe, that they were about to be forced to become *Protestants*, there can be little doubt but they would go a step further, and endeavour to make the *other classes* of natives believe, that they also would soon be obliged to adopt the same faith. The number of Protestant missionaries lately sent to India ; the variety of proposals for translating the Scriptures into the Oriental languages ; and even the very mission of Dr. Buchanan, to the Travancore churches ; might give an appearance of plausibility to these suggestions, which our enemies would readily lay hold of.

That such rumours did exist, is beyond doubt ; and that they were industriously circulated, by Mahamudans and Hindoos, is generally known ; as well as the further report, that the *Sepoys* were the *first* on the list, to be thus forcibly converted : and hence, the surmised change of a turban into a hat, naturally made the deeper impression upon the weak minds of those, upon whom such subtle arts had been practised.

A stronger proof cannot well be adduced, that such artifices must have been practised upon the *Catholic Christians*, than that nearly three-fourths of the men composing the 2nd battalion of the 23rd regiment, which assisted in perpetrating the horrid massacre at Vellore, were of that description ; having been just raised from amongst the Polygars of the lately disarmed

southern countries; and in whose clothes, (when killed with arms in their hands), were found their Catholic certificates, written in the French character, but in the Malabar and Gentoo language. And why, may it not be asked, when the word was passed to destroy all Christians (meaning English or Protestant), were the drummers and fifiers of the two corps, and who are all known to be Catholics, so active and ready to take up muskets, and assist in killing the Europeans? A Protestant Naigue (corporal), on guard at the Sally-Port, hearing himself called for, during the massacre, and fearing to be put to death by the mutineers, quitted the fort, and carried information to Arcot, of what was going on. I mention this circumstance to prove two things:—first, that the mutineers were inveterate against Protestants, and assisted by Catholics, when the cry was to destroy all Christians; and secondly, that we ourselves, hold *native* (Indian) Christians, in so despicable a light, that only *one man* of that religion, could be found, amongst 2,000 native soldiers, who had obtained the rank of even a corporal in our military service.

I shall now consider another cause, that has been suggested by no less a personage than *the Commander in Chief*, as likely to have influenced the late general disaffection towards our government: viz. the introduction, into the country, of our present judicial system, and the establishment of the civil courts: which have not only caused a general alarm amongst the natives, as an *innovation* on their institutions, as asserted by the com-

mander in chief, but which, as asserted by his adherents, have given the natives an idea of independence and liberty, incompatible with the British interests in India; and especially, by holding up the Indian as an equal to, and on a footing with, the European; whereas, it has hitherto been supposed, that much of our influence, if not our *very existence in India*, depended upon the *old* ideas of the natives, that the European character was superior to that of the Indian, in war, policy, and civil administration, at least.

It would be difficult to reconcile these two, apparently contrary, assertions; to wit, that the civil courts and regulations have, on the one side, "alarmed and annoyed" the natives; and, on the other side, have so far encouraged them, as to endanger our existence in India, were we not acquainted with the *motives* for such assertions, and the real grounds, on which they are advanced.

The Commander in chief goes on to say:—"at present, they (the natives) view a different order of things; and in the place of the old and experienced officer, to whom they have long looked up with respect, they see his power and ascendancy passed away, and the youthful, inexperienced judge, or boyish collector, occupy all, and more than, his former place."

Here is a key to the Commander in chief's sentiments. His complaint is not against the too great or too little power and ascendancy, but against the *hands* in which it is lodged; and what hurts him, is, that it is transferred from the military officer to the civil magis-

trate. But this key also unlocks another door, and proves, that the Commander in chief was *fully convinced* of the propriety and necessity of employing "the old and experienced officer," at the time he was giving away all the principal commands in the army, to the *inexperienced*, if not also *boyish*, king's officer, just arrived from Europe ; and consequently, as unfit to exercise authority, as the *least* experienced judge, or *most* childish collector.

But I will now proceed to shew you, why *his adherents* assert, that the regulations and courts encourage the natives, so as to endanger our very existence in India.

Previously to the establishment of these courts, the civil collector was the receiver of the rents and revenues, and had also the sole administration of the police, with magisterial and judicial powers, *throughout each province* ; with the exception of such cantonments, or garrisons, as might be situated within it ; which latter were exclusively under military law, and subject to the *commandants*.

The profits of the *buzars* (markets) of these cantonments, and the taxes upon spirituous liquors, intoxicating drugs, &c. (amounting, in many places, to £200 and £300 *per mensem*), were deemed the private emoluments and perquisites of the commanding officer ; whose Dubash, having the entire collection of them, and assisted by what military force he chose to demand, did not always confine himself to the regulated taxes, but proceeded to levy arbitrary fines and contributions, upon

every class of people, and species of property, within the limits of his sentries. The collector of the province, also, was probably in the hands of as great a rogue, under the denomination of head manager, Daroga, and sometimes of Dubash; and the power and opportunity of oppression, was here tenfold, to that of the person employed by the military commandant: for when one party was always *prosecutor*, judge, and jury, little justice was to be expected for the *defendant*.

Hence the necessity for a change of system, that was not intended to give the natives of India any ideas of independence upon the British Government, but to afford them protection against the arbitrary power and oppressions of British individuals, and their servants. The system, already tried and approved of in Bengal, after an experience of many years, was, with trivial local alterations, established under the presidency of Fort St. George. The collector was left in the superintendence of his revenues: but the civil, judicial, and magisterial power, over the province, was taken from him, and vested in a controuling court of justice (superintended by a judge and magistrate); in which any native might bring his suit, even against the collector of the province, or his revenue servants, who, under the old system, had been his oppressors.

The *military* buzars and taxes were, at the same time, given to be superintended by the *civil* collector; and the profits, instead of being, as hitherto, deemed the property of the commandants, were thrown into a general "buzar fund;" to be divided, under the direc-

tion of government, by officers holding certain commands of districts, divisions, &c.

The authority of the commandants, formerly, arbitrarily exercised within the boundaries of the cantonment, was, at the same period, limited entirely to complaints and cases strictly military; the civil power over the inhabitants, being given to the civil magistrate. Thus the commandant, formerly looked upon as the first and principal person at a station, became now only a secondary character, if not a cypher; for whilst confined entirely to the duties of his garrison parades and drill, the inhabitants, who formerly trembled at the nod of his tyrannical Dubash, soon converted their fear into neglect, if not contempt: and he, who had formerly the choice of every delicacy at his table, was now frequently at a loss how to obtain a good joint of meat for dinner; and then obliged to purchase it, in competition with the other families and officers of the garrison.—Hence one of the complaints against the growing insolence and independence of the natives.

Whilst writing this, I am informed, on undoubted authority, that orders have arrived from Europe, to strike off the “military bazar fund” from officers, and carry it to the revenue accounts of the Company in future. This was the last article of perquisite, or emolument, remaining to commanding officers; so that now, an officer’s pay, being nearly the same, whether in or out of command, *one* of the two great sources of perpetuating jealousies between the King’s and Company’s officers, may be said to have been taken out of the hands of any

future Commander in chief. The officers have nobody, however, but themselves, to blame, for the loss of these and many other emoluments ; which have been cut off, one after the other, by their quarrelling about the division of the profits. There is now no inducement for any King's officer, of rank or interest, to serve in India ; and few will go but those who may be obliged to join their corps there.

But to return :—I am far from saying, that officers may not have better grounds of complaint against the civil regulations, than those I have mentioned above. One, that I have frequently heard urged, is the hardships and difficulties which an officer meets with, in passing through the *Company's* provinces, to join his corps ; a circumstance so opposite to the kindness which they experience in the districts *not* dependant on our government. Within the former, the inhabitants, being taught by the civil European collector, that they may keep or sell what they like, of their own property, have frequently been known to refuse an officer, either provisions for himself and servants, or grain and provender for his cattle and horses, although tendered exorbitant prices for it : and the ground, in many districts, having been sold to individuals (without any reservation, even “right of quarries”), the proprietor will refuse to allow an officer to pitch his tent upon it : This, for want of judicious internal regulations, or rather the proper execution of those in existence, the laws intended only for the prosperity and protection of the native, against the British, individual, have, in several in-

stances, placed the latter at the mercy of the former, of which they are sufficiently eager to take advantage; a circumstance tending to shew the British officer, in a disreputable and degraded light, to the native inhabitants.

The commanding officer of a detachment marching through the country, who was formerly so much respected for the protection he could afford the inhabitants, now, like the commandant of a station, feels himself neglected, from the establishment of a civil police, which has superseded the necessity of a military one.

An officer, whether commanding a detachment, or travelling alone, cannot do an inhabitant the smallest injury, without a complaint being immediately lodged against him with the European magistrate; who, being seldom on the spot to enquire into the merits of the case, will frequently forward, to government, the most trivial injury, shaped into the form of a heinous crime, against the officer: whilst there is a general complaint, on the part of the officers, that whenever they, or their servants, are insulted or injured by the inhabitants of the district, no possible redress can be had from the magistrate, who will seldom condescend to notice the application.

This, I have no doubt, is frequently the case: but I look upon such conduct, as the sole fault of the magistrate, and not of the system. There is little difficulty in framing the best of regulations, but there is a very great one in enforcing the due execution of them; and to this, government should pay the most particular and

pointed attention, and not allow the smallest or most partial infringement of them on either side.

You will have heard of the great jealousy *formerly* existing between the civil and military branches of the service, but which was found to be dying away very fast. The governor was, formerly, himself, a civil servant of the Company; and generally, or, I may say, invariably, took part against the military, in any matter of dispute referred to government. Lately, however, not only in consequence of the governor coming from Europe *unbiassed*, but also from the greater number of King's officers holding commands, (who would not quietly submit to be treated with indignity by the civilians), the government had shewn much impartiality: but now that the commandants are entirely at the mercy of the civil magistrate, who is ready to listen to every complaint against the military, much jealousy has again unfortunately arisen; and is taken advantage of, if not instigated, by party factions.

You may not be displeased, perhaps, at my saying a few words about these courts, established to determine civil suits amongst the natives; which have been objected to, as encouraging the already too litigious disposition of the natives, and as being at variance with their own ideas of religion and cast; in bringing forwards, before a court, at the malicious instigation of any villain, all their domestic, and even connubial, connexions: and these general objections, being encouraged by the statement of the Commander in chief,

who is a member of the government, will render an enquiry into this subject the more necessary.

It appears, that the nature of these courts has been either wilfully misrepresented, by those who ought to have known better; or ignorantly misinterpreted, by those who knew nothing of their constitution: for there is a general outcry against the *impolicy of introducing British Judges, and British laws*, amongst the natives of India; whereas, on the contrary, every cause brought into these courts, is determined by the civil laws of the parties at issue, if of the same cast; and by those of the defendant, if of different casts: But the slightest perusal of the judicial code (which has, long since, been sent to Europe), will shew you, how much the subject has been misrepresented. We all know, that the best of laws may be abused; and it is to prevent, as far as possible, this abuse, that an English civil servant, (who ought, by the regulations, to be well qualified, by a previous knowledge of the language and laws of the Hindoos and Mahamudans), is appointed by government to preside in each native court; not to decide, himself, on the cause brought before it, but to superintend the decisions of the native judges, forming the Court, and consisting of learned Kazies and Pundits; as well as to see, that no unfair means are practised in passing judgment, which must not be arbitrary, but grounded upon their respective, written, law authorities; to which, if necessary, he himself can refer, either in the original, or translation. The only difference, therefore, if you allow

the natives the blessing of their own system, they had a number of small courts, (where most questions were decided by bribery,) without any controuling power, or board of appeal: whereas, now, a larger court, consisting of well-educated judges, and controuled by an impartial European umpire, is open to them, with the option of appeal to two superior courts.

Although some instances may have occurred, where domestic subjects have been brought into court, by the malignity of one party; I cannot allow, that it is either contrary to their laws, or to their customs and habits, under their own system. I am further of opinion, that the necessity at present, of bringing them to fair and public hearing, will decrease, rather than encourage, domestic feuds and quarrels; from the necessary exposure of the parties to public notice, which they cannot, as formerly, avoid by a private trial.

I am not either prepared to conceive, how the general sentiment of the country is against the establishment of these courts, whilst I daily behold the multiplicity of suits, *increasing* on the files of each court, and which cannot be got through, for want of time to hear them: indeed, they are multiplying so fast, that this great propensity of the natives for litigation, is likely to correct its own evil, by overloading the courts with business.

I think I have now touched upon all the objections that have been made to these courts; and you will be able to judge for yourself, how far the introduction of them may be deemed worthy of being classed amongst

the variety of causes, which are said to have led to the late disaffection or not. For my own part, the principal objection I have to state against the system, is the extravagant enormity of its expense, in salaries to the judges. Those of the European judges alone, of the three provincial courts of appeal and circuit, now cost government the monstrous sum of £40,000 sterling per annum; exclusive of the salaries to the *European* registers, assistants, and writers, and of those to the *native* judges, kazies, mowlawies, pundits, interpreters, sheriffs, darogas, and other officers of the courts! From this specimen, you may guess at the magnitude of the whole expense of the judicial system; there being one superior and about twelve inferior, or (zillah) district courts; whose judges have salaries, in proportion; but none less than £4,000 per annum.

The reason stated for granting these large salaries, (which have raised so much of the Commander in chief's ire against the judges), is, that no petty, or even large bribe, might tempt a judge to swerve from his duty; whilst enjoying a salary, so liberal, that a few years of economy must enable him to retire to his native country with honour. Now, that all judges should be independent in pecuniary circumstances, will be very readily allowed; but it might be reasonable to hope, that some less expensive check might be laid upon the conduct, if not upon the honour, of these gentlemen. The collector of a district, with more responsibility, has only half the salary of the youngest, (or zillah) judge; at the same time that his temptation

and opportunity of making a fortune, by underhand methods, is tenfold to that of the highest judge: so that an unprincipled collector might take advantage of such an argument, and suppose himself *allowed* to make up his salary equal to that of the judge, by any means least likely to be found out.

In stating what I have, in favour of the *judicial* system, I am far from saying, that the whole of our system in India does not generally tend to enlighten the minds of the natives, and open their eyes to the bonds in which they have been held, by the Brahmins, for many hundreds of centuries:—how far it may be our interest to assist them in breaking those bonds, cemented by their religious adherence to cast, and immemorial usages or customs, I cannot say. I will venture, however, to affirm, that greater lengths have been gone, in loosening these chains, within the last century, and perhaps within the last thirty years, than had ever before been done in five hundred years.

It has been a prevalent, but erroneous theory, in Europe, to suppose, that *previously* to the wicked invasions of the peninsula of India by the Mahamudans and Europeans, the innocent Hindoos had enjoyed their thousands of centuries in a profound state of uninterrupted peace:—for, both before and since the days of Alexander the Great, it is confirmed, by every book of eastern history, that the most sanguinary wars were carried on. The ancient history of Ceylon, Mysoor, and of every part of the Dukin, will prove the same; and you can scarcely travel fifty miles, without

finding the ruins of some city, which, at one period or another, has been the seat of government to the neighbouring districts. Their wars, at that time, were Hindoos against Hindoos; and, whichever party conquered, still the same civil polity, the same religion, the same manners, dress, and customs, as before, prevailed in the country, which rather changed its limits and boundaries, than its government.

On the invasions of the Mahamudans and Portuguese, the face of affairs was entirely changed; and, although the conquerors subdued the Hindoos, and subjected their country, they could not break the religious prejudices of their minds: and their attempting to do so *by force*, (and these conquerors were equally bigoted), only made these prejudices take root the deeper. The effect, however, of the British administration of government, has been very different, on the minds of the natives in general. In the room of religious persecution, these have found the most perfect toleration, and an encouragement to make use of their own proper reason. They have seen the seminaries for the education of their own youth, which had been destroyed by bigotry, not only rebuilt, but liberally endowed: and their ancient books of law and religion, which had been buried in the most secret recesses of their temples, have been again brought to light for their general information, edification, and guidance, in religious, moral, and civil duties and obligations.

You will scarcely read one narrative of the Catholic missionaries, without finding great abuse thrown upon

the Brahmins, for refusing to communicate the contents of their books to these bigots. Their motive, however, was very plain; for they observed, that the missionaries only wished for this information, merely to misrepresent or ridicule it, in their attempts to make converts.

The reasons why the Brahmins observed a directly opposite conduct towards the English, (in not only giving us their books, but teaching us the language in which they were written), are no less evident: for they perceived, that the English, instead of making use of their books to their annoyance, had no other view, than that of disseminating the knowledge they contained, for the benefit of the natives, and of properly regulating the conduct of government towards them; which a *perfect* acquaintance with their laws and customs, could alone enable us to do. But if you peruse the accounts of some, even late, travellers, you will see, they wish you still to believe, in Europe, that neither the books of the Hindoo law are in our possession, nor the language of them understood by us; although the former are daily referred to, for legal decisions, in fifty native courts of justice, formed of learned pundits; and the latter (Sanskrit), is one of the best instructed of the classes, in the college of Fort William.

That the encouragement given to learning, and advancement in every stage of improvement, by the English government, has created a general emulation amongst all classes of natives, to open their eyes, and

make use of their own abilities and capacities, instead of following the systems of their forefathers; no one, I think, will deny; but the greatest advancement in knowledge, has been made by a class of people formed of *all casts*—Brahmins, Malabars, and Gentoos, who, having attained the English language in their youth, have spent their days in the service, public or private, of British gentlemen. These persons have not only obtained great wealth (being proprietors of the greatest part of the Carnatic soil), but a very considerable acquaintance with the principles of government and policy of the British, as well as of other European, states; which they take care to keep up, by a constant perusal of the newspapers and publications transmitted from Europe.

These persons are not confined to Madras and its neighbourhood, as formerly; but may now be found, as interpreters, English writers, Dubashes, and heads of public offices, wherever the British have civil or military establishments.

Their behaviour, no less than their common language, serves to prove, that they wish to be deemed *illuminati*, and persons above vulgar prejudices; and although they dare not violate their laws of cast, by doing or eating any thing positively forbidden, yet they openly declare, that religion is only intended for the illiterate; that God is the sole and supreme ruler of this world; and that Vishnu, Brahma, Shiven, and the rest of their Gods, are only idolatrous symbols and attributes of his power, used by the Brahmins to create

more awe, by imposing on the minds of the vulgar and lower classes.

Not twenty-five years ago, if any one of these persons had met a church Brahmin, he would have jumped out of his palanqueen, and stood, in the most submissive posture, until he had gone past; but now, they have so far conquered this respectful feeling (called prejudice), that should not the Brahmin get out of the way, he would certainly be run down without any ceremony.

But the Brahmins, themselves, have very considerably tended to decrease and destroy that respect, which they formerly received from all inferior casts, by quitting the profession of the priesthood, and entering into all the usurious and avaricious paths which lead to *worldly* honours, riches, and preferment. This degeneracy may easily be traced, for it is not long since it commenced. On the conquests of the Mahamudans in the southern countries, we find it recorded, in Persian authors, as a disgrace to the Brahmins, that some few had given up spiritual for temporal concerns; and had officiated, in the public departments of state, as ministers, cashiers of the treasury, &c. But this degeneracy has so rapidly increased of late years, that we now find them invariably employed, not only in every office of government, nearly to the exclusion of all other casts (especially in the revenue department), but also in the management of most commercial concerns of individuals; where they can only act as agents; their

law positively forbidding them to practise commerce as principals.

A small proportion of Brahmins have indeed been left, for the purpose of attending the Pagodas, ministering to pilgrims, and conducting the ordinary religious ceremonies; but they are kept in so poor and indigent a condition (being dependant upon the rich Brahmins, who have got hold of the revenues set apart by government for the Pagoda), that it is impossible they should gain the respect or veneration of those to whom they administer their rites. The rich and worldly Brahmins, having thus set the example of despising the officiating and church Brahmin, no wonder that it should be followed by persons of inferior cast; and especially by such as, having received deistical ideas, from a more liberal way of thinking, imbibed by their communication with Europeans, already begin to aim at shaking off the chains of prejudice in which they have so long been held.

Such are the persons I have above described under the name of *illuminati*—whose astonishing compositions, in English, you may daily read in the Madras newspapers: for it has lately been the fashion, for the first and most learned of the English, not only to encourage them to write for the public, but to correspond with them, themselves, on literary subjects.

The number of these people increases every day, and English schools (taught by Brahmins) are thronged with students, at all the large stations, as well as at Madras. The quickness and capacity of these boys, is, in

most instances, astonishing; and the beauty of their writing, is proverbial: for their cool habits of living, allow them to pay the most unwearied attention to the most trifling subject, until they have conquered it.

There is no doubt, therefore, but that, in a very short space of time, a still greater change will be visible in the modes of thinking, throughout every class, in India; and that the more enlightened they get, the more rapidly will their former admiration of *European superiority* vanish. But any one, who has been in India for the last twenty-five years, and observed the very visible effects of this illuminism, may form a pretty accurate opinion of its future rapid progress. Many of these literati have risen from the lowest classes; and have commenced their career as menial domestics to English gentlemen. The same cunning, intrigue, ability (or whatever name it goes by), which raised them from nothing, to this height, may, if opportunity occur, raise them, at some future period, into an exalted station in the political hemisphere.

I need not here enter into a discussion, to prove, that the Hindoo institution and government (until conquered by foreigners), has been held together, so many *thousand* years longer than any other we have ever heard of, solely by the barriers of cast.

The facility of acting, which these give to every department of the state, is in nothing more evident than in the *police*; which is here rendered, not only more bearable, but free of all trouble and inconvenience to the subject, by the heads of casts being responsible for

the behaviour of the whole. But what better principles for the natives to act upon, could a foreign conqueror wish or demand, than that of *cast*; which confines every individual of the conquered nation, to his own private station in the community?

How far therefore our introduction of systems, tending to enlighten the natives of India, which must ultimately break down this barrier of *cast*, by raising the lower, to a level with the higher, classes, may be deemed a proper measure of British policy, I am unable to say.

We have, hitherto, held India, as all foreign, and especially European conquerors must do, by the influence of public opinion, no less than by the length of our sword. Any event, therefore, that weakens the former, must strike deep at the root of our existence in India; so long as we can only afford to have the latter wielded by 20,000 British soldiers, dispersed amongst, at least, *ten millions of native inhabitants*!

But after introducing, amongst this host of natives, principles, tending to shew them the state of degradation in which they have so long been held, and inspiring them with sentiments, that must soon cause them to vindicate the injured dignity of human nature; I say, after this, it may be asked of the advocates for illuminism, whether they are prepared to admit these our fellow subjects to *a full participation of political rights*, and allow their representatives a seat in our House of Parliament? If it be not advisable to admit them to these rights, in proportion to their advance-

ment in knowledge, how are we to expect they will allow us to remain in India, after having gone such lengths? Do you look to their gratitude. Alas! no such virtue is known amongst them; they have not even a *simple* word that is expressive of it, in their language.

The power given you over them, by the influence of public opinion, and their ideas of our superiority, will have died away, along with their other prejudices; and how long the *power of the sword* may then last, it is impossible for us to conjecture: but this is certain, that both *now* and *then* you must hold and rule India by a military government; ameliorating the condition of the people, to the utmost, by granting them the indulgence of their own laws, rights, and customs, in the fullest and most ample manner. But further you cannot go: they have never yet lived under any other than a military and arbitrary government, neither can we expect, from our own experience, that they *will* ever be governed by, or submit to, a yoke that is not despotic.

It will be well worth the consideration of the British Government at home, therefore, in making provision for the administration of our Indian possessions, *to keep this continually in view*: and it will be no less the duty of the British Government in India, to see that, whilst they grant every indulgence to the natives, in the full enjoyment of their own laws and customs, nay, even encourage them to *cherish* these ancient institutions as their *greatest blessings*, they at the same time do not permit them to overleap their boundaries, and grasp at

those ideas of British liberty, which are totally incompatible with *our* existence in India: for I must repeat it again, that *by their prejudices we have gained, and now keep, our possessions in India; and by their prejudices, alone, must we expect to hold them in future.*

I cannot conclude this subject without noticing a paragraph, in the letter I have already quoted from the Bishop of Landaff, to Dr. Buchanan. His Lordship says;—“*our empire in India,*” said Mr. Hastings, “*has been acquired by the sword and must be maintained by the sword.*” I cannot agree with him in this sentiment. All empires have, originally, been acquired by violence, but they are best established by moderation and justice!”

From a perusal of this celebrated divine’s writings, I have always been accustomed to look up to his character with a degree of esteem, reverence, and respect, that makes it difficult for me to believe, that this paragraph could have come from the pen which has always been guided by so much liberality of sentiment. Did Mr. Hastings ever utter a sentiment, which could be construed into a hint, that moderation and justice should *give place* to the sword; or did he not rather mean to insinuate, that these should be supported by it?

That his Lordship should have dissented from the opinion of Mr. Hastings, would have been a proof of the goodness of his heart, in shewing his unwillingness to believe, that our station in the east, was so critical, as to oblige us to maintain it by the sword; but the remainder of the sentence is a libel upon every hour of Mr.

Hastings's government, as unguardedly, and, I trust, undesignedly, written by the Bishop, as it is unmerited by Mr. Hastings. In short, this, and the concluding paragraphs of his Lordship's letter, are evidently the effusions of the heart, rather than the dictates of his deliberate judgment.

Can you, from all your store of ancient or modern history, shew us a parallel to our acquisitions, or our situation, in India?—It is as new as it is wonderful. A handful of persons, so far despised, by the general voice of many millions of natives, that to *touch* one of these strangers accidentally, cannot be done unpollutedly, or without immediate purification; and to *eat* with one of them, or of *victuals previously touched by them*, cannot be done without loss of cast, and degradation through the remainder of life:—I say, such a handful of despised people, to talk, or think, of governing our immense possessions, by moderation and justice, *unsupported by the sword*, is to expect a miracle! Are we in India, I would ask, at the solicitation of the natives, or only on sufferance, until they can turn us out?

That moderation and justice were maintained by the sword of Mr. Hastings's power, is a truth, which the voice of millions of those natives, who had felt the blessings of it, long proclaimed, before the ears of the British nation would listen to it. But the strongest proof in favour of his government, is, that our subsequent prosperity has been entirely raised upon the foundations of moderation and justice laid by him.

I have already said, that the Indian nations have *always* been governed by a despotic power, and that they are used to no other. How then would it agree with the sentiments, even of the learned Bishop, to find us, through ideas of moderation and justice, *forcing* them to establish a government they had never known, or could comprehend, and to espouse a religion, whose votaries they despised and abhorred? But, to class the Hindoos with American and African Pagans, shews as little local knowledge, as to speak of the *tyranny* of Pagan superstition, and the *despotism* of their native princes *in the East*: when, from every record of ancient Hindoo history, it appears, that nothing could be more lenient or paternal than the government of their princes, although despotic; nothing more mild, or inoffensive, than their religious worship, although paganistic. But the arguments of the heart, cannot, in politics, stand against those of the head; and the *long experience* of a person, even less conversant in the habits, customs, and religious prejudices of the Indians, than Mr. Hastings, must be allowed more weight, in influencing an opinion on this subject, than the most humane or beneficent theories of the most learned and philanthropic Christian.

Having now, my dear Sir, gone through all the subjects that I have heard connected with the late disturbances, and given you our *Indian* ideas, *pro* and *con*, upon the cause of them, I will hasten to the close of this already too long letter:—

If the conclusion, that I have drawn from facts,

should strike your mind as correct, you will perceive, that our existence in India, at present, hangs by a very slender thread; owing, in a great measure, to the incongruity of the system by which our possessions are governed.

The first, and most obvious remedy, therefore is, to simplify the government, as much as possible, both at home and abroad: for, at present, we find opposed to each other, first, in Europe, the Ministry and the Court of Directors; then, in India, the Governor and Commander in chief. The senior member of the civil council opposes the junior; and the whole government is set against the bench of King's judges: the King's army are disinclined to the Company's; and lastly, the military are in opposition to the civil authorities.

think that he is in earnest? Is a country, that supports, from its revenues, a *standing army of two hundred thousand men*, with a judicial, civil, and revenue establishment, larger than most of the powers in Europe; and which yields, from its commerce, more than 5 per cent. upon its capital, together with some millions of revenue to the nation, in Custom-house duties:—I say, are the masters of such a country to be deemed, or to be believed, in a state of bankruptcy? If they are, it is the fault of the system under which the possessions are governed, and not of the possessions themselves.

Again, when a member of the Board of Controul shall stand up in Parliament, and say, that “Ministry cannot alter the present system of Indian affairs;” and that, “taking the government of India from the Court of Directors, would throw too much patronage and influence into the hands of the Crown,” can any person believe him serious?—when it is so well known, that the whole of the influence and patronage is at present in the hands of ministers, under the cloak and name of an East India Company!

I am fully sensible of many bad effects that must, most assuredly, ensue, from a *total* alteration of system; because, unless the subordinate agents, whether civil, commercial, or military, are brought up and practised *from youth*, on the scene in India, our affairs there must very soon wear the most unpropitious aspect. Each branch *must* serve an apprenticeship, as well to gain a knowledge of his profession, and of the languages, as to season himself to the climate. A

continual change of agents also, would tend to sharpen the appetite of avarice, until the country would be so drained of its resources, and so disgusted with our oppression, that it would be no longer worth our holding.

Were the King, or the Company, to be masters of India, I look upon it as a circumstance equally indispensable, that their servants, civil and military, should be sent out in their youth. The principal patronage would, therefore, be confined to the appointment of civil writers and cadets; and will any one say, that such a patronage would throw too much additional influence into the hands of the Crown? Should the whole of India, indeed, be thrown open, and the innumerable capital civil appointments, from £1,000 to £6,000 a-year, be left at the disposal of the King, without their being, as at present, claimed as the reward of services, in a gradual and progressive rise in the civil list; and should the whole of the staff, field and general officers, be nominated at the will of the Sovereign, *from his army in Europe*, and without paying attention to the meritorious claims of the officers who may so long have served in India; then, indeed, a good plea might be given, in bar to an entire transfer of these civil and military establishments to the Crown. It might be prudent, however, as a trial, to leave, at first, the revenue, as well as commercial, concerns, entirely under the management of the Company; and only to transfer the army and politics of Europe, into the hands of the Crown.

The principal objection to the military transfer, would be made by the officers of the Company's army in India; unless, indeed, they should have confirmed to them, by Parliament, such rights as they had established to themselves, by their engagements, on entering the service of the Company. To prevent an abuse of patronage, by Ministers, in this immense army, it might also be prudent, on the part of the legislature, strictly to define those rights; and such a definition could not be deemed an encroachment upon the Royal prerogative, as head of the army, if made *previously* to the transfer.

I have already shewn you above, that the company's officers have nothing to gain by such a transfer. The distinction, since they received King's commissions, is not, strictly speaking, *even nominal*, between them and the regulars serving in India. On the contrary, however, they have much to lose; unless the transfer should be made on the most liberal footing. Should *purchase* be allowed, (as in the King's army), they must be liable to daily supercessions; and an officer, who had obtained a majority, or a company, by fifteen or twenty years' service in the sultry climate of India, might be transferred to a regiment at Quebec, or the coldest parts of the world. The only mode, in which purchase could, perhaps, be permitted, would be, after so many years of *actual service with a Sepoy corps*, for each rank: say, two for a lieutenancy; five or six for a company; ten or twelve for a majority; and fifteen for a lieutenant-colonelcy. The necessity for this is

obvious: for, were it otherwise, new officers, daily joining corps of Sepoys, and entirely unacquainted with their language, manners, prejudices, and customs, would shortly renew the scenes, which have so lately nearly proved fatal to our possessions in the East.

The principal disadvantage which the Company's army at present labours under, is, as I have said in another place, *the total want of stimulating honours*. Let me again request you to advert to the conquests made in India, and to read the military history of the British nation, which, of late years, (with the exception of Egypt and Maïda), has been totally confined to India. Read what was done, *before the smallest proportion of King's troops were introduced into India*; and also, the many subsequent proofs, on record, of victories obtained, through the discipline and courage of the Company's troops. Is it not strange, then, since the claims of valour cannot but be equally strong in all situations and in all countries, that out of all these brilliant campaigns, battles, and sieges, which occurred during the greatest part of a century, not a single Company's officer should ever have been thought worthy of the dignities which have been conferred, on those British soldiers, who have distinguished themselves in other countries? It is, however, highly honourable to the Company's officers, that, notwithstanding this marked neglect of their services, and the continual state of degradation, in which it has, of late years, been attempted to keep them, they have ever considered, as a sufficient stimulative and reward, the con-

sciousness, that, on all occasions, they have done their duty.

But, as my aim has been to throw light upon the past conduct of those who have had the management in India, rather than to suggest plans for the future, I shall here conclude; only begging you, once for all, to remember, that what I have said, although strictly applicable to the coast of Coromandel, may not, perhaps, be equally so to the other Presidencies, of Bengal and Bombay.

I am,

Your's, &c.

NAJEEB.

